

Uncovering Fermentation

Living Stream Ministry has published many books of truth and that also minister life. However, in rendering an acceptable standard of truth and admission about their history of turmoil and division in the Local Churches, they fall far short of the truth. For a prime example, *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion* that claims to give accurate accounts of the late 80s turmoil is a book of fiction, with misrepresentations of men and events; and their motives and intentions throughout its pages.

Uncovering Fermentation gives true and full accounts with striking detail of LSM's "march over all the obstacles" toward their goal of establishing LSM-centered churches.

The tragic and mistaken intent of the book is to place former leaders in the worst light before the churches, and to put Witness Lee, his ministry office, and movement in the best light; albeit at the expense of omitting important facts and critical details of truth.

Miscellaneous Accusations

Reasonably Addressed

1. "Fermentation" from Hong Kong

Witness Lee begins *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion* by saying,

The present rebellion began to ferment first in Hong Kong as early as 1985 by Joseph Fung. I use the word ferment purposely because leaven existed there (1 Cor. 5:6-8; Matt. 13:33), and this leaven, this corruption, began to ferment from Hong Kong.

If there was some sort of fermentation in Hong Kong, it was not without conflict with the LSM office in Anaheim, as other churches encountered also over the next three years. A consistent factor in the so-called "rebellion" of the late 1980s was conflict with the office. Brother Lee reports, "Joseph Fung came to Anaheim and he had a confrontation with my ministry office. That caused much hardship between my office and the church in Hong Kong because of him" (p.10, *FPR*).

"Because of him!" He does not mention that the manager of Living Stream Ministry, Philip Lee, might have had some responsibility for that hardship between the LSM office and the church in Hong Kong. We are to take Brother Lee's word that it was Joseph who "caused much hardship".

In *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*, page 10, the alleged ambition and temper of Joseph Fung was mentioned. The word ambition was used many times by Brother Lee to describe the character of some brothers who didn't walk in lockstep with him. It was determined that "they must want something for themselves". This was their alleged ambition.

Joseph Fung had spiritual measure, experience, and significance. Philip Lee did not. Overall, he had a sordid reputation and his temper was a part of it - and it was a part of the huge problem that he was in Anaheim, Taiwan and many other places, to many saints, elders, coworkers, and churches - not only as LSM bookroom manager but, lamentably, as much more.

2. “Fermentation” from Hong Kong

Witness Lee continues in *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*, claiming that “the fermentation in Hong Kong had spread to Europe, specifically to John So in Stuttgart, Germany”.

He shares, “At the same time that Joseph Fung was working in Hong Kong and John So was working in Europe, the two began to have contacts with various saints in the United States in 1987. Joseph Fung made trips to the West Coast of the U. S. A. and contacted disgruntled or innocent saints here and there....On the other hand, John So began to have contact with some saints in the Southeast of the U. S. A. and to exert a negative influence upon them. At one time he spoke with a brother from four to six hours over the telephone, expressing to him the matters he was bothered with. He also began to communicate with John Ingalls and others in Southern California through the telephone. By all this it is evident that the fermentation that was taking place in Hong Kong and Europe began to work in the United States” (p. 42, FPR).

After speaking in this way, Brother Lee alludes to his assumption that a “conspiracy” must have been taking place, saying, “During that entire period of time they kept these communications from me. I did not know then that they were working actively behind my back”. In relation to his assumption, Brother Lee once shared with the elders: “It is when we are impure that we become suspicious. We become detectives to spy out the meaning behind what others say. If we are pure in our motive, we do not have such a thought. We are on another globe, taking others’ words in a simple way.” - W. Lee (*Practical Talks to the Elders*, pp. 26-28, 1982)

On the claim “the fermentation in Hong Kong had spread to Europe, specifically to John So in Stuttgart, Germany”, we have to ask, where is the proof of this? No information is supplied by Brother Lee to substantiate his claim. He simply makes an assertion.

Of course, whatever Brother Lee would say, people would receive as the truth. What may not be the truth becomes “truth” to people simply because he spoke it. Indeed, whatever he asserted about his conspiracy theory and that people believed began without proof. It, therefore, began without a solid foundation to build upon.

On the claim “John So began to have contact with some saints in the Southeast of the U. S. A. and to exert a negative influence upon them”, what was the negative influence? According to whose evaluation did John exert a negative influence upon these saints?

Brother Lee gives no details about this and leaves no impression that he knew the saints personally and what they could testify concerning John’s visit.

He also gave the reader no hint about what was going on in the recovery to stir up two long-time co-workers to rise up and come to the U. S. to minister to others. Such information is kept from the reader. Neither did Brother Lee offer any proof in his book to establish that John and Joseph worked together, or prove that they were somehow conspiring or had any other motive in coming to the United States than to care for the saints and the recovery, according to the Lord’s leading and the burden they had in their heart. Why would Brother Lee be suspicious?

The Claim that Brothers Were Involved in a Conspiracy

John Ingalls – “It is not our desire, nor has it ever been, to overthrow anyone’s work or ministry, neither have we desired to put anyone’s ministry aside, but rather to bring everything to the light and put everything in the proper context. A report has been circulated that we would not be satisfied until we brought a certain person down; this report was erroneously applied to us. We never had any such intention, nor have we ever conspired against anyone – the Lord knows this and can testify for us. The accusation of conspiracy made against us is an utter falsehood – our testimony as recorded in this account bears this out. Rather we have grieved over those in leadership who have swerved from the path they once proclaimed and espoused. We desperately hoped there would be some change to resolve the serious problems that had emerged, and we fellowshipped earnestly with Brother Lee to this end. We have lamented the damage inflicted and suffered by many saints through practices and attitudes that we too in some measure participated in... For my part, I humbly repent of this”. (*Speaking the Truth In Love conclusion, 1990*)

Al Knoch – “Anyone who knows John Ingalls knows that he is not ambitious; he is not that way. Who would want that responsibility [of taking over the recovery]. There was no conspiracy” (from an interview with Al, Nov 2000).

John So – In his Manila presentation, John So expressed surprise at the conspiracy charge:

I would like to just go through Brother Lee’s outline concerning the rebellion. It says the rebellion began to ferment from Stuttgart in 1986. What I would like to do is just give you the chronological events of what took place. I will only deal briefly with things that I personally know quite well, concerning myself, Stuttgart, and Europe. I don’t know and I am not thoroughly familiar with what went on in Hong Kong. I really do not know and I cannot say anything in details. So, I cannot speak for brother Joseph Fung. And I didn’t know exactly what happened in Anaheim in the very beginning. So I cannot speak for brother John Ingalls. I really cannot. And when things happened in Rosemead, I really had no idea what was going on there until I read the literature that they had put out. I did not even know that we had ever formed together an “international conspiracy ring” until Witness Lee said so. I am quite surprised. None of the places I’ve mentioned involved me. Okay, Witness Lee claims that rebellion and conspiracy started to ferment in Stuttgart in 1986. I’m going to start at this point.... (1990, John So’s testimony given in Manila by their invitation)

John Ingalls – John Ingalls speaks of having the same “heart’s burden” as others.

Brother Lee mentioned then that Bill Mallon, John So, and myself all used the same term – central control. He deduced that we must have consulted or “conspired” together. The fact was that we all had the same realization because of separate similar experiences without any consultation and certainly without any “conspiring” with each other. John So began to be concerned in 1986, Bill Mallon in the spring of 1987, and myself in the fall of 1987. Eventually, as we had done for years, we had telephone contact with each other, and our heart’s burden came out.

John Ingalls – John shares the following refutation of the conspiracy charge:

At this point we felt that it would be useful for the brothers we had contacted to come together to fellowship and pray in preparation for going to see Brother Lee, so that we would be clear concerning the issues we would present to him. Moreover, we believed it would be best not to create any stir among the saints or other elders by doing this openly;

so we sought some place where we could all meet privately. This was by no means a conspiracy, as we are being charged. At no time did we ever meet with the purpose of plotting to overthrow Brother Lee and his ministry. That is utterly ridiculous. We never had such a thought – the Lord can testify for us. A private meeting or a secret meeting does not constitute a conspiracy. A conspiracy takes form from the content of the meeting. Is it a conspiracy to pray and fellowship together in preparation for visiting Brother Lee and opening our hearts in frank fellowship? Of course not. We were very concerned for the saints and sought for an extended period to cover the grave matters from them lest they be distraught and we suffer worse consequences.

One of the brothers I sought to contact and confer with was Ray Graver, an elder in the church in Irving, Texas, and the manager of the LSM branch office there. I called him in Texas and proposed that I come to see him in Irving. It was thought, however, for us to meet in Irving would attract too much attention; so we settled on meeting midway in El Paso, Texas. This decision is being censured now as a plan for a secret meeting, as if that in itself is evil and a conspiracy. But I fail to see anything wrong with this. It was with a pure motive and desire and certainly was not a plot to draw him into a conspiracy to overthrow anyone's ministry. Ray was quite willing to do this until Benson Phillips, another co-worker and elder in Irving, Texas, who was then in Taiwan, advised him against it. Had Benson been in Irving, I would have sought to speak with him also. I enjoyed a very good and close relationship with both Ray and Benson for many years.

John So - John So speaks straightforwardly to Brother Lee:

Originally, I did plan to go to Anaheim to have some personal fellowship with you [Witness Lee] as you requested by phone early December. (I must say at this time I was not too polite anymore. If you would consider that as maybe a rebellion, that's fine with me. Consider it as a rebellion. Conspiracy, that is also fine with me.) In my last page, I told him, please do not think that I'm against you or am opposing you because of my writing you this letter. I do not have the slightest intention to oppose your work or your ministry. Neither do I have any desire to convince any brother. By the Lord's grace, I like to be straightforward and follow my conscience, not to hide anything and not play politics, not to please anyone, or to offend anyone. May the Lord have mercy on all His churches. (I ended the letter that way.)

Bill Mallon - Bill Mallon was very concerned over serious developments in the Southeast churches and of course he opened to other brothers about his concerns, but he spurns the idea that there was ever a conspiracy to overthrow someone. He said this “would be funny if it were not so tragic” to be charged in this way.

The brothers simply came together to discuss their serious concerns and desired to bring those concerns into fellowship with other brothers, including Brother Lee. John Ingalls approached Brother Lee sixteen times on behalf of the feeling of many brothers and the burden that many of them had at that time. Ken Unger went to Brother Lee twenty times. After a considerable amount of time had passed with little progress being made, certain brothers began to speak out according to their convictions, based on the Word of God, prior church ministry, and their conscience. This, however, was interpreted by some as speaking differently, and negatively, and being against the new way in the churches.

The Claim that the Dissenting Brothers Were Rebellious (pp. 74-75, *FPR*)

John Ingalls – The following word from John Ingalls is taken from the conclusion of his book.

We are also widely and vociferously accused of being rebellious and of fermenting and fomenting rebellion. This also is an extremely serious charge, and one which I feel obliged to respond to and deny. Against whom, I would ask, are we rebelling. And what was our act of rebellion? For my part I have always sought to have a good conscience before God and man. To remain silent in a situation of departure and degradation, or to withdraw into “judicious obscurity”, as some have done, would have been for me unconscionable. Not to speak out or to refrain from warranted action would have been for me a form of rebellion against the Lord’s inner speaking and urging. My object was to follow the Lord, obey His Word, and practice the truth, fearing only Him. Perhaps I fell short in some particulars. Apart from that, however, “I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord” (I Cor. 4:4). I therefore consider the charge of rebellion to be totally inappropriate and unfounded. Is it rebellious to voice one’s concerns, care for one’s conscience, obey the Lord’s Word, and follow the inner anointing? This is what I did and sought to do, as this account testifies. Was I ambitious for position or did I seek to raise a following for myself, as some say? The Lord knows that this is far from the truth. I can only consider the charges of rebellion and conspiracy to be a form of character assassination, and a means to cover one’s own track.

John So – John So describes the relationship that he was expected to have with LSM that he could not go along with. The course he then took was perceived as rebellion:

In my last page, I told Brother Lee, “Please do not think that I’m against you or am opposing you because of my writing you this letter. I do not have the slightest intention to oppose your work or your ministry”.

At that time, I really meant what I said according to my understanding of the function of the ministry office; and I fully agreed with Witness Lee that if the LSM is only operating on the business side to print books and to distribute tapes, then we brothers should accept this, and cooperate with them.

Well, the question is this: I was accused here in *Fermentation* of pretending to be one with LSM, but that really I was against them [rebellious__ED]. Tonight let me say a word. I don’t want to vindicate, but I just like to share at least the way we look at it. Everything has two sides. I’m sorry to say, it is not that I am pretending. It is because the LSM office really has a double standard. There is a public declaration that the office is only for the business side to print books, to duplicate tapes, and to send them out to serve the churches. But to my realization, there is another aspect expected of us. During the visit of these five brothers to Stuttgart, two of them stayed with me in my home—two of them. And these brothers began to fellowship with me concerning the office, that it is really brother Philip Lee and that brother Philip Lee is the closest and most intimate co-worker of Witness Lee. And that I need to get into the fellowship with him, and that our brother, Witness Lee, needs his son. And after almost every meeting in Stuttgart, they made a long-distance call to the office to report everything that is happening. To the office! The report went to the office.

I was, in short, expected to do the same. I told the brothers in a very good way—we were not fighting—I said, “Brothers, I’m sorry, in short, I just cannot do that. You have the grace to do it, that’s fine, but I just cannot do that.” I told the brothers maybe some

other German brothers, like Jorn Urlenbac could do it. I was told, No, no, no, you are the right person to do it. I said, Thank you, but I can't do it. This is what I realized later was the cause of many problems that we in Stuttgart began to experience with the LSM. Report had gone back to Philip Lee that I refused to do what the brothers were doing. Looking back, this is what caused a serious problem with him.

In my view, however, what they were doing in reporting everything to the office had nothing to do with Witness Lee's public declaration of what the office is. I didn't feel there was a need for me to report to the office what we were doing. But these brothers who came to Stuttgart were telling me that Witness Lee's son is his closest and most intimate co-worker. I have to say I had never heard such a thing before. But these two brothers who stayed with me assured me that this was true though Brother Lee doesn't say this publicly. Well, I say, if I haven't heard of this, I just haven't heard of it. Anyway, a report went back to Anaheim, and somebody wasn't happy with me. I was happy with everybody, but somebody wasn't happy with me. I didn't realize it at first, but as time went by I could see that we had problems with "the office" because we lacked cooperation with the manager of the office.

It is not right, therefore, to say that on one hand I declare that I am for the ministry office, but on the other hand, I don't cooperate with it. I want to let you know that something more was expected of us at LSM that we could not cooperate with. And, someone was not happy with us about that.

...Witness Lee should know about our fluctuation. Why? My goodness, if he knows about the consideration of the whole earth, this is a little matter. He should know why there was a fluctuation. The fluctuation was due to the new expectation "the office" had for us, which we could not cooperate with. Of course this made it difficult for us to work together in one accord with LSM.

Bill Mallon – In the Southeast, Bill Mallon endeavored to be one with Brother Lee, the co-workers, and the new way, but ran into serious problems with LSM representatives, who avoided fellowship with him, and other elders, in order to establish LSM influence in the Southeast churches. His reaction to their usurpations and control of the churches was perceived as rebellion by brothers and sisters in the churches who didn't know his circumstances.....

The Claim that the Brothers Were Against the New Way

On page 51 in *Fermentation* is a claim indicating that the brothers were not for the new way to build up the churches. In reading the accounts of these consecrated brothers to the Lord's recovery, it is easy to understand why they became alarmed over serious developments in "the Lord's new move" and why they began to meet together to discuss those developments and, eventually, to speak out concerning them.

Their main concern was for the real situation and condition of the churches, and, they endeavored to minister to the saints accordingly. It was said that they were not for the new way in the churches and that they were ambitious. Yet, their own accounts tell otherwise, that they were indeed for the new way and that they were also for the building up of the church and the churches. The following excerpts show their supportive position for the new way before the disturbing elements from LSM began to arise in the implementation process of the new way that forced them into a different and unpopular stance.

John Ingalls – “That afternoon I went to Brother Lee’s apartment according to our appointment. My desire was to assure him that I was not opposing his burden as set forth in the main points of the “new way” (as it was defined in those days). He had indicated that we were indeed opposing. I told him that I was absolutely not against the preaching of the gospel by door-knocking or by any way; that I was absolutely not against the practice of home meetings; and that I was not against any other matter he emphasized. Rather, I was for these things. Brother Lee received my fellowship and remarked that he had never had any problem with me; he only felt that I should have stayed in Anaheim more and not traveled so much. Our talk ended peacefully, but I was not encouraged.”

Bill Mallon – Letter to Witness Lee, “You mentioned about what Watchman Nee saw in 1937 and 1949, how he saw the new way of practice for the church life, and now is the time for us to fulfill his vision. I truly want to be a part of this also and give my absolute and overwhelming support... While we need to fulfill Watchman Nee’s and your burden, yet at the same time we must also beware of another side element subtly creeping in. Brother Lee I have drunk of your spirit, and I absolutely followed spiritual authority and the intrinsic element in the flow of the river, which brought in the mutual life and love of the local churches. But I fear that another thing is coming in ... May it be exposed before there is a total collapse.”

“Is it too much for me to make this honest assumption: Is the one accord which the office promotes the one accord of fellowship, or is it the one accord of lining up with the office? Let me strongly declare that the brothers in the South are committed to do anything and everything in their power to cooperate with any burden you, Brother Lee, may have, but why this harangue?”

“I know that this is a big recovery, and I feel very happy that we are trying to return to the scriptural way, and God forbid that I should try to hinder what has been gained already. For me to take the attitude and action that I have taken, however, indicates that I am desperately concerned ...lest the subtle enemy sneaks some leavening corruption into the fine flour. We must be warned of certain danger-signs and beware of our vulnerability for being baited into a snare”.

John So – *Letter from John So and 63 leading ones to Witness Lee* - ...“In these days, through the fellowship of the brothers you have sent, the vision of God’s New Testament economy and the new move in His recovery has been renewed and strengthened in us. Furthermore, through the sweet fellowship with the brothers a deep desire for fellowship with all the brothers in the Lord’s recovery has been awakened in our hearts.”

“We further agree to practice the church life in our locality absolutely in the new way: to build the church in, through, and based upon home meetings; to get every member used to functioning without any idea to depend on any giant speakers...” [1986]

John Ingalls – “On the weekend of January 27-29, 1989, Brother Lee had a conference in San Diego. He believed he had discerned the reason why some of the older elders and co-workers had some concerns regarding his work and the local churches, and he enunciated his feelings in one of the conference meetings. He spoke as follows:

Witness Lee – “So today, let me tell you, the problem among us is this: there is a kind of consideration among the older co-workers -- not all, but some. There was a kind of consideration -- Where shall they be? Brother Lee was the one who brought the recovery to this country and was the one who through the Lord’s ministry brought many, many of the older co-workers into the recovery. But now this one who brought the recovery to this country is seemingly deviating. Deviating from what? Into what? That’s right, deviating from the old into the new. Now some of the co-workers have to consider where they should be. Shall they remain in the old, or shall they

go forth into the new? Go forth? To say this is easy. You have to pay a price, especially the older ones. They have made a success in the recovery according to the old way, but now the old way was annulled. Then what shall we do? If you were them, surely you would consider. I must tell you, this is the root of all the troubles among us today. All the other things are on the surface; the root is here. Now you know.”

John Ingalls - “This analysis absolutely missed the mark. I was surprised when I read the transcript that he could judge so superficially by saying that the root of all the problems is that the older co-workers would not leave the old way and take the new. At the present time he has revised his explanation, yet still misjudges.”

The Claim that Mallon Convinced Ingalls to Dissent

On pages 43-44 of *FPR*, Witness Lee says,

The fermentation eventually developed into a conspiracy in the fall of 1987. Brothers from different parts of the country began working together in an undermining way to exert influence on other leading ones. All this was done privately. Around that time, John Ingalls visited Bill Mallon in Atlanta. Bill brought him out to the countryside and spent a few days with him and eventually convinced him of his dissenting views and thus gained him. Up until that time, according to my knowledge, John had not spoken anything negative or critical about me...However, when John Ingalls came back to Orange County from Atlanta, there was a definite change in his attitude. He began to play an active role in this conspiracy.

John and Bill talked about the trouble that was arising in the recovery – and they were right about it. It was the trouble arising in the recovery that stumbled John Ingalls. It wasn't Bill Mallon.

John Ingalls in talks with Bill in Atlanta mountains – **“In the following month, September 1987, due to my health, and also due to a burden to fellowship with Bill Mallon, a co-worker with whom I had an intimate relationship for twenty-four years, I decided to go to Atlanta, Georgia, for a two-week period of rest and fellowship. Bill had recently passed through sore trials and sufferings [with LSM--ED], and I hoped that our fellowship could render comfort and encouragement to him. We drove up to the nearby mountains and had a number of days opening to one another.**

At that time I was entirely supportive to Brother Witness Lee and his ministry and work related to the “new way” that was being promoted. I therefore did my utmost to persuade Bill to visit Taiwan and participate in the full-time training. I felt that this might be the answer to his need. On four separate occasions during those days I attempted to convince Bill to take this step, but he steadfastly refused, affirming that he was not free or clear to do that.

During that time Bill explained to me how he had suffered in various ways by events that had transpired in recent months in the churches and in the work in the Southeast. I came away from our talks with one deep impression: Philip Lee was becoming increasingly involved in spiritual things concerning the Lord's work, the churches, the elders, and the co-workers. I had already noticed this in Irving, Texas the preceding month. This, I felt, was completely untenable, incompatible with his position and person, and intolerable. Philip Lee was employed by his

father, Witness Lee, to be the business manager of his office and was reportedly instructed to deal only with business affairs. He was totally unqualified both in position and character to touch spiritual matters related to the work of the Lord and the churches. I became alarmed and began to fear for the Lord's testimony. With this burden I determined upon my return to Anaheim to fellowship with Godfrey Otuteye, who then was involved in coordinating with Philip Lee in the Living Stream Office. I wanted to frankly ask him about Philip's role, expressing my alarm and concern".

Philip's increased involvement in the work and the discovery of Philip Lee's moral misconduct at LSM were the initial factors that began to change John Ingalls.

The Claim that John said the Taipei Training Should be Stopped

Brother Lee stated on page 51 of *Fermentation* that John Ingalls said the Taipei Training should be shut down. Whether John said so or not, the training had brought much concern to others also, beginning with the problem of Philip Lee being in charge of the trainers. This was not a trivial matter, as Philip was a person reportedly found drunk several times in Taiwan, and, as the story goes, the brothers sometimes had to try to get him sobered up when it was time for him to address the trainers or the trainees. In addition to this, his former secretary reported to others that she had to clean up pornographic literature and whiskey bottles for Philip in his office. This was the person in charge of the training when Brother Lee was not available, which was most of the time due to Brother Lee's sickness and his spending of time on the Chinese translation of the New Testament.

John, incidentally, did not feel that he said the training should be shut down. That he, and others, had serious concerns, though, was very true, as well as justifiable.

John Ingalls – "In addition we began to hear reports, see video tapes, and read printed messages published by the Full-time Training in Taipei of some of the things that were being said and done. Now this really alarmed us. Foremost among these was the fact that Philip Lee was the administrator of the training, supposedly only on the business side, but actually exercising supervision in much more than business affairs. He was in daily fellowship with twenty-four of the trainers and leading ones who called and reported to him all activities (failure to do so resulted in an offense). The trainees were even told that Philip was administrating the training. His power and position were growing immeasurably.

Statements made by some of the trainers in Taipei amazed us, as I am sure they did many others. Some examples are as follows:

- 1) 'There is no need to pray about what to do; just follow the ministry.'
- 2) 'We don't even need to think; we just do what we are told.'
- 3) 'Follow Witness Lee blindly. Even if he's wrong, he's right.'
- 4) 'If you leave the training, you'll miss the kingdom.'
- 5) 'Our burden is to pick up Brother Lee's teaching and way to make us all Witness Lees, like a Witness Lee duplication center.'
- 6) 'To be one with the ministry is to be one with B. Lee, the office, and P. Lee.'
- 7) 'Since Christianity is in ruins, the Lord raised up the recovery; since the recovery is in ruins, the Lord raised up the FTTT'.

An account of Brother Lee's position was given by one of the leading trainers of the FTTT to a group of brothers in Dallas, Texas, in the summer of 1986, in the context of how to be one with the ministry. There are witnesses to confirm it. It goes as follows.

The Father is number one, the Son is number two, the Spirit is number three, and Witness Lee is number four; and then there are those who are with Witness Lee. A brother asked, "And who is number five?" The trainer replied, "It is not yet quite clear who number five is", but pointing out "You brothers do not have access to Brother Lee. I and another trainer do. We can walk into Brother Lee's apartment any time and have breakfast with him. The way to know what Brother Lee wants us to do is to be in contact with those who have access to him. They will tell you what he wants you to do." The hosting brother asked, "Isn't this a hierarchy?" The trainer replied, "No!" The brother asked, "How then does this differ from what we've been condemning?" The trainer answered, "If the elders in a local church would practice in this way to carry out their burden, it would be a hierarchy; but if this is practiced to carry out the ministry's burden, it is not a hierarchy".

When Brother Lee heard through us the above speech of his trainer, he took steps to rebuke and correct him. That such nonsense could be spoken by one chosen by Brother Lee to lead his training after all we have passed through and heard from Brother Lee's ministry is difficult to understand.

Many aspects of the training bothered us considerably. Elders who attended the training in Taipei were instructed explicitly to carry out the same training in their localities. Pressure was exerted upon the churches and elders to follow, implement, and conform to everything that came out in Taiwan. Failure to do so created problems. The effect on so much emphasis on ways, methods, and practices – all externals – resulted in a wilted wilderness condition among many of the saints.

Many faithful older saints were rebuked and given the impression that because of their age they were through. All official assertions to the contrary, the full-timers became a special class of people, and the full-time training was exalted above the churches, which were considered to have grown decrepit and were at best "better than nothing" (Andrew Yu, in *Voice of the Young Heart*). The elders were publicly degraded and blamed for all the ills. And yet the churches with the elders, and especially many of the older saints who were somewhat despised, gave generously and sacrificially to support the training. Their money was gladly accepted. In fact some of the churches were drained financially due to the heavy burden of supporting their full-timers and other projects that were promoted.

Video tapes of the FTTT convention on Nov. 23, 1986, and the FTTT graduation ceremony on June 1, 1987, surprised us with the mixture of worldly ways and gimmicks that were practiced and hitherto strongly condemned among us....

I have no relish in mentioning these things. My object is to record and inform the readers of the matters that burdened and concerned us in the fall of 1987".

The Claim that it was said the Manager of LSM Should Be Fired

On page 51, *FPR*, John Ingalls is charged with suggesting that the manager of Living Stream should be fired, as if this was an attack and not a legitimate suggestion. The LSM manager was responsible for immoral behavior and for division in the churches, which Brother Lee was well aware of before he released *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*. Yet he indicts John Ingalls for suggesting that his son, Philip Lee, should be fired! As was shared earlier, Paul Kerr, a promising younger brother in Anaheim during the turmoil, wrote: "*In the real business world, where I operate, Philip Lee would have been fired, legally charged by the abused plaintiff, forced to settle for millions of dollars and he and the LSM would have been reported to the California labor board*". Brothers like John Ingalls and Paul Kerr should be commended for their integrity

when there was none in the political handling of Philip Lee by others during the late eighties turmoil.

The Criticism that John Ingalls said the Churches had now become for the Ministry instead of the Ministry for the Churches

On page 51 of *FPR*, John Ingalls was criticized for saying that the churches had to be *for* the ministry. There was every indication that the churches had to be *for* the ministry or be considered “dropouts” (see appendix 3). There was a strong pressure placed on the elders and churches to line up with the ministry/leadership of Brother Lee and his office (Philip Lee). John’s main point was that the churches had to be “for the ministry” in order to be in “one accord” with the churches and with the system being established in the recovery. Inherent to being “for the ministry” was also to be for Brother Lee’s practical leadership. Leadership and ministry became almost synonymous and the words interchangeable. Churches all over the globe were to line up with the ministry/leadership of Witness Lee as the unique leader in the recovery. Now to say that a certain brother is *not* for “my ministry” meant “this brother is *not* for my leadership”.

The local churches became strongly organized under the ministry/leadership of Witness Lee. A system was set in place with **THE MINISTRY** preeminent. Now the churches had to be *for the ministry* in order to be in the oneness of the local churches. John Ingalls meant that such an emphasis on the ministry was never there before, because the ministry was simply for the churches; the churches did not have to manifest that they were *for the ministry*.

John Ingalls on being for the ministry –

In those days I had further fellowship with Godfred and with some of the brothers we had contacted, with whom we had intimate fellowship through the years concerning the Lord’s work. We realized that the spiritual condition of the churches throughout the United States and in other places, generally speaking, was very poor, very low. We searched for the reason. Something was radically wrong. The Lord’s blessing was not among us. Life was at a very low ebb. In a number of places there was considerable discord and dissension, and instead of a steady increase in numbers, there was a steady decrease. We began to realize then that there were practices and tendencies among us that we had never considered before. And, we ourselves as well as others were responsible, having participated in these. But we had not seen clearly or realized previously what was being done. Thus we began to come to some conclusions.

I believe that the first was that the ministry was being given a place above the churches. It was being too highly exalted and emphasized, so that it became imperative for every church now to manifest that they were “for the ministry” and to “serve the ministry”. It was no longer, as we were often told, that the ministry was for the churches and that only the churches should be built up; rather the churches now should be for the ministry, and the ministry was being built up. We felt that we should voice such a concern to Brother Lee.

Change after Remarkable Commendations of Brother Lee and His Ministry

On page 43 of *Fermentation*, Witness Lee says, “Bill Mallon brought John Ingalls out to the countryside and spent a few days with him and eventually convinced him of his dissenting views

and thus gained him. Up until that time, according to my knowledge, John had not spoken anything negative or critical about me. Rather, early in 1981, he gave messages in New Zealand in which he compared Brother Nee and myself to the two sons of oil in Zechariah...in which there is a point likening Watchman Nee to Moses and me to Joshua, who brought the people into the good land.”

John Ingalls Commendation

John Ingalls gave the highest endorsement imaginable of Brother Lee’s ministry, which is recorded in seven pages of *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*, p. 44-51. Brother Lee shares, “As late as March 1986, John spoke strongly for the one accord and the ministry in a conference in Mexico City, saying that ‘when you leave the ministry you leave your first love’; that ‘when we leave the ministry we have fallen’; that ‘the ministry brings us the tree of life’; that ‘the ministry prepares us in such a way to be faithful unto death’; that ‘when we take this ministry...we get the hidden manna’; that ‘the ministry is like the morning star to us’; that ‘the Lord is coming through the ministry’; that ‘the ministry brings us the seven Spirits’; and that ‘by keeping the ministry we become Philadelphia’. This message was given only one month after I gave the messages on one accord in the elders’ training in February 1986. Surely it was a strong confirmation of my messages, showing that the speaker was more than positive toward my ministry”.

“Could anyone be more positive toward my ministry than he? Yet, only one and a half years after the giving of this message, he became one of the leaders in the present rebellion and took part in the conspiracy against my ministry. He had a radical change! This is incredible and illogical.”

John So Commendation

In May 1986 John So spoke strongly and lovingly of Brother Lee, the ministry, and a sweet and practical coordination with the office (pages 21-25 of *FPR*). He went on for four plus pages this way, exhibiting the highest regard for the recovery and cooperation with the leadership of “the apostle and the ministry office”, a testimony that was in striking contrast to his testimony that came after his eye-opening experiences with LSM.

These two very high commendations of Brother Lee given by John Ingalls and John So showed that their respect for Brother Lee and regard for his ministry was at the top level. Bill Mallon, in his letters to Brother Lee, was also very high in his regard for Brother Lee and his ministry. These brothers were all very happy to be under Brother Lee’s ministry. Although Brother Lee said he could not understand their change in attitude toward him, their change was both logical and reasonable. What was truly “incredible and illogical” was Brother Lee’s change, and bizarre, costly actions 1) the hiring of a sinful, unspiritual son 2) not firing his sinful son after hearing reports that warranted his dismissal 3) either lifting up his son for others to recognize or allowing him to be lifted up, recognized, and followed by others 4) covering over the sins of his son in the office of LSM 5) covering over his son’s divisive work and that of other LSM members 5) not acknowledging publicly the corrupting elements his son brought into the recovery 6) not repenting for anything 7) publicly displacing all blame on others, “the brothers who have caused the present turmoil”.

The contrast is indeed striking between the *established love* of these three brothers for Brother Lee, his ministry, and the Lord's recovery, and their *change in attitude* toward him, his ministry, and the recovery. Brother Lee attributed the brothers' change to an attack of the enemy, stating that these brothers became "agents of Satan" to make division among the churches.

He seemed to be unaware of his own susceptibility to the wiles of the enemy.

In reading the testimonies of these three eventually quarantined brothers, John Ingalls, Bill Mallon, and John So, and realizing their desire for the things of the Lord in the recovery, one has to wonder how they could have experienced such a shift in their position without drastic factors being present to cause the change. Those factors were indeed present, and they were as "incredible and illogical" to John Ingalls as *his change* was to Brother Lee.

Brother Lee Portrayed as Old Eli

Although clear indications warranted it, Brother Lee complained of being "portrayed as the old Eli" from the Old Testament (p. 70, *FPR*). Instead of acknowledging his record of leniency with his two sons, he complained about the comparison, as he did about every legitimate complaint made about him. Brother Lee had two sons who were reputed as sinful men and evildoers. Many saints knew this and had to live with this knowledge in the church. Both sons were placed in prominent positions in two different businesses of their father. One was made president of a secular, saints-supported business called Daystar, a builder of luxury motor homes. The other was made general manager of a church-related business, the Living Stream Ministry. Both brought corruption to the businesses and into the recovery and into saints' lives. Both committed sins of sexual immorality at the "doors" of the church. Both the sons and the sins were being tolerated.

The second son's acts of immorality have been, in part, already represented in appendix 2, where two eye-witness accounts are given of his sexual improprieties. The first son, Timothy, has his history also. It is said that he boasted to "have a woman in every major city in the world!"

When work on the motor homes was taking place in Taiwan, rooms at a hotel were provided for the American workers. At the end of the hall from where one American worker stayed was a room where Timothy Lee resided. He frequently was visited by a "certain lady" or ladies and was caught and reported to Brother Lee. The brother, not Timothy, was dealt with, and sent back home to the U. S. This matter became known because of an elder's wife who knew Timothy's wife and often had the "Lee clan" into her home where she learned many things. "Tim's wife would phone [my wife] and pour her 'guts' out to her in anger. She had found out about Timothy's escapades." This was the person who was put at the head of Daystar, Timothy Lee.

Why would brothers with a conscience in the recovery not compare Brother Lee to the "old Eli"?

This same former elder reported: "Timothy had come into our bedroom [where his baby's bassinet was] and he ended up trying to molest my wife, putting his arms around her. She ran him out of the house and went straight to Brother Lee and reported the incident to him. Witness Lee said, 'Don't tell your husband. I will handle it'. The way he handled it was to send my wife and I to San Francisco." (This is also the way he handled the immoral problem with Philip Lee in the LSM office; he sent the woman, and her husband and family, away to Texas!)

I am sorry to have to give such a report to the reader, but there are two sides to talk about concerning Brother Lee. The one side we have all enjoyed and appreciated, being the grateful recipients of the riches of Christ that he has dispensed into us through a heavenly ministry for

many years; the other side is what we have not all seen, and we certainly cannot enjoy or appreciate, but, we can and should take into account its corrupting effect in the churches.

The story of Eli from the book of First Samuel:

Now Eli was very old; and he heard all that his sons were doing to all Israel...

And he said to them, why do you do such things, the evil things that I hear from all these people. No, my sons: for the report is not good which I hear the Lord's people circulating.

Then a man of God came to Eli and said to him, "Thus says the Lord..."Why do you kick at My sacrifice and at my offering which I have commanded in My dwelling, and honor your sons above Me...

And the Lord said to Samuel, "Behold, I am about to do a thing in Israel at which both ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. In that day I will carry out against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. For I have told him that I am about to judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knew, because his sons brought a curse on themselves and he did not rebuke them. And therefore I have sworn to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever. So Samuel lay down until morning. Then he opened the doors of the house of the Lord. But Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli." (*1 Samuel 1:12 - 3:21*)

In Brother Lee's final words of his dishonoring talk to the elders and co-workers in *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*, he said, "instead of excellent Christian virtues, what we see in the present rebellion are exaggerated criticisms..." (p. 75). Is the portraying of Brother Lee "as the old Eli" an exaggerated criticism? Actually not. It is a valid criticism, one that he should have humbly acknowledged.

Comparisons to Mao (p. 69, *FPR*)

Another "exaggerated criticism" was the comparison of Brother Lee to Mao in China and the new way to his government programs that were implemented to move that civilization ahead to compete in the modern world. Mao Tse Tung launched the Great Leap Forward and The Cultural Revolution to bring the huge backward population of China out of the old way and into the new. Brother Lee was well aware of Mao's objective and early success in revolutionizing China and how throngs of people crowded the streets by the millions demonstrating their support for their leader. He knew how the system was changed through the handing out of and the dropping from airplanes pamphlets all over the country and through a nationalist book on "Maoist thought".

Films today show those fervent throngs, especially the young people, chanting over Mao's word and teaching. Brother Lee knew (and Philip Lee knew) how Mao treasured his Red Guard unit, an "army" of young people who were commissioned to go throughout China and "mess up" the people in the old way and bring them into the new way in schools, shops, factories, businesses, and government. Everyone and everything was to be overturned, and the Red Guards were aggressive and forceful to carry out the new way, according to their leader and his vision.

No one is saying that Witness Lee was another Mao or that Mao's spirit came into him. But the fact is that the movements ran parallel in many respects to the new way. Even the trainers had this spirit in the full-time training, exhorting the young people to "learn from the Red Guards", as if they had studied the revolution. The trainers encouraged the young people to be "little Witness Lees" and the churches to become "Witness Lee duplication centers". Whether it came from the mouth of Brother Lee or from the mouths of the trainers, the concept projected was the same, that we were to become fully engaged in Brother Lee's *thought*, teaching, ministry and leadership.

Because of the facts of our forceful and aggressive history and the spirit demonstrated in “the Lord’s new move”, the comparison to Mao is fair, whether the “programs” worked for better or not in the churches.

The similarities don’t end with these comparisons though. Discouragement set in during Mao’s movement when reports started circulating about people starving to death on government–controlled communes. When the reports kept coming of a huge number of deaths and failed government agendas, Mao had to act and speak to the masses (See appendices 3, 1). He was very concerned about the “co-workers” around him in the movement and was sure there was a conspiracy to overthrow him or to assassinate him.

Such are reasons for the comparisons to Mao and his government programs. My point is mainly that the criticism of those who reported these similarities to Mao is not sustainable; the similarities do exist. Philip Lee and others brought the outward similarities to life by their inward reckless spirit of abandonment to the cause, reminiscent of the way of the Red Guard, who they apparently desired to emulate.

John So’s Positive Word For the Ministry

On pages 21 and 22 of *Fermentation* Brother Lee says,

In May 1986 five brothers from the U.S.A. went [to Stuttgart] in my place. During that time John So was very positive toward my ministry and the fellowship with the brothers. He testified strongly during the fellowship with the leading brothers that “we absolutely have no control in the Lord’s recovery and I do believe our brother [Witness Lee] is a unique testimony in this matter. He never controls us; he never controls any locality, and he never controls anything.” He also said that “there is a unique leadership” and that “the matter of the leadership requires 100 percent followers”; that “we need to follow in a 100 percent way with our whole being exercised, even in a detailed, fine way”; that concerning the Living Stream “there is an ignorance and somewhat an indifference on our part that we do [need] repentance”; that there is the need “to build up such a relationship”; and that “all should pray for the office and the manager of the office”. He warned that if they did not take the “steps of fellowshipping with the apostles and with the Living Stream Ministry, [it] won’t be long that we will be off the track.” He claimed that “what the ministry is speaking today is what the Lord is speaking today”.

Pretense Behind a Mask

On page 25, *FPR*, Brother Lee remarked,

Was this fellowship given in May 1986 a genuine and honest word? Or was it a systematic lie spoken in pretense behind a mask? This was not one comment spoken in haste, but a consistent attitude expressed over a week’s meetings. Based on the fact that the fermentation of the present rebellion began in Stuttgart in October of the same year, with the giver of the fellowship playing an active role, it is difficult to believe that his fellowship was genuine and honest. If it were genuine and honest, yet he could become a top leader of the present rebellion, it would be difficult, with this kind of fluctuation, for anyone to have mutual trust in him for the Lord’s interest and would be impossible for anyone to work together with him in the Lord’s work for the long run.

On page 26, *FPR*, Brother Lee continued,

John So signed a corporate letter that spoke of the “sweet fellowship” he had with the five brothers who came to Stuttgart and that through them “the vision of God’s New Testament economy and the new move in his recovery has been renewed and strengthened in us” and “a deep desire for fellowship with all the churches in the Lord’s recovery has been awakened in our hearts.” The letter ended with the words, “Brother Lee, we love you.”

It is too bad that Brother Lee did not offer the whole story. He did not speak the truth about John So, and, thereby, misrepresented him. We have to consider: What would make a brother like John So change? The same thing that makes a husband and wife change when corruption enters into the relationship. That relationship could quickly change, and end in divorce. Without repentance and purging away of the corrupting elements, there cannot be a genuine relationship between the couple. Before the corruption was realized, the relationship was harmonious and the couple could have “sweet fellowship”. So it was with John So. He was married to the recovery, until the leaven came in to corrupt, affecting a change in him to the point of severing his relationship with Living Stream.

Brother Lee knew the whole story of John’s struggle with Philip Lee, and he knew of LSM’s divisive activity in Europe. He also understood that John was aware of his son's moral misconduct in the office of Living Stream. Further, Brother Lee knew that he himself did not respond to requests from John So to deal with the problems in Europe caused by LSM. Yet, Brother Lee did not share these things with the leaders of the churches and chose to dishonor John before them instead. In so doing, a true testimony was not given by Brother Lee to all the saints in the pages of *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion* concerning brother John So.

Hint of Control

On page 33 of *Fermentation*, Brother Lee asks, “Where is the hint, even a little hint, that Witness Lee or Philip Lee or anyone of my office in the past did something to exercise their power over any church?”

At the time Brother Lee asked this question in *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion* numerous reports had come to him from all over the world that were more than mere hints of control. He knew the stories of LSM control beginning with complaints from Hong Kong in 1985. Then, Stuttgart in 1986; Rosemead 1986; the Southeast 1987; England 1987; Anaheim 1988, to name notable examples. He also knew that a sister who worked at LSM wanted to give him a comprehensive report on “hints of control”, but he wouldn’t listen to her 11-page report (Appendices 1, 3).

He also didn’t listen to *John So, Bill Mallon, John Ingalls, or Joseph Fung* about LSM domination, usurpation, and control in their localities and region. His support, overtly or covertly, was with his son and LSM’s aggressions and manipulations for accomplishing his goals. The four brothers mentioned, coincidentally, were the same four brothers who were later quarantined, essentially for reacting to the control of LSM in their localities and beyond.

The dismissal of complaints of interferences and control by LSM are common in *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*, Brother Lee consistently choosing to look past reports and act as if they didn’t exist. It seems Brother Lee could never call the interferences for what they were, acts of control to set up LSM “in business” around the recovery, saying on page 31 in *FPR*, “We only knew to help and to do everything to expedite the Lord’s recovery in so many countries and to help the churches. That is all we knew.”

What prominent elders and the LSM sister referred to as interferences and violations of the oneness in the Body and the bypassing of fellowship with elders, Brother Lee described as expediting the Lord's recovery. The control was to such an extent that Brother Lee was forced to speak to the problem in an international elders' training (ET, Book 9, pp 61-63), saying, "Our going on should be according to what we have seen from the Word. There should not be any control, and the leadership is not in one controlling person." He added, "I do not control; and the Living Stream office would not control". Using the words "would not control" means that they certainly did control, but he did not expound on that, saying only, "mistakes may have been made in the past", which he also didn't explain, or atone for.

But testimonies do explain and answer the inane question, "Where is the hint, even a little hint, that Witness Lee or Philip Lee or anyone of my office in the past did something to exercise their power over any church?"

Of course, Bill Mallon enumerated the incidences of manipulation and control by Living Stream in his letter to Witness Lee. John So did the same in his Manila report. David Wang gave his full report of LSM control in Rosemead. And, John Ingalls relates the events and concerns in Southern California during the tandem leadership era of Witness Lee and Philip Lee. There were many other people and places who could give reports on "hints of control".

One matter that the LSM sister must have tried to relate to Brother Lee was that the LSM office, i. e., Philip Lee, cut off the supply of literature to churches that offended him in some way, and their elders were forced to come to him and apologize. Representative examples of this follow.

Eugene, OR "There was a time when the church in Eugene Oregon was cut off from receiving life studies at all because we returned some that went unpurchased by saints. LSM would send up enough life studies for all in attendance and expected all to purchase, which not all did... It was resolved by the elder recruiting skilled brothers to write letters of praise and even a new hymn to Witness Lee, and it worked." - **Kirk**

Flagstaff, AZ Elders were stunned when literature stopped being sent to the church in Flagstaff due to the Chinese-speaking side having a surplus of unsold life-studies that the bookroom returned. The whole church was punished as a result, and many saints were demoralized by the act. (former elder, asked not to be identified)

If a brother was *thought* to be in rivalry with LSM, even in some small way, he was dealt with and must apologize. In the following example, a prominent elder in the recovery was forced to kow tow to Philip Lee.

Bill Mallon

In 1985, after the training, I felt to type out the notes I took. I sent them to several brothers to share with them the fellowship of the Spirit, one of which was located in London. (Barbara and I during the winter of early '85 were graciously hosted by one couple in the London area, so I sent them my notes as a gesture of my appreciation.) Philip Lee claimed he consulted with WL and that I should never have done it. He reprimanded me, implying it was in rivalry with their printing department, and said these notes should never be sent before the book was published. He demanded that I retrieve all notes sent, and that I come to Anaheim and apologize to him. I went to Anaheim and apologized, stating that it was totally unintentional. He fell asleep in front of me, and I had to wait for him to wake up. (email, Dec 2006)

These matters of control and many other stories like them were reported to Brother Lee, but he had no ear to hear and no heart to *know*. Brother Lee said, “We only knew to help and to do everything to expedite the Lord’s recovery in so many countries and to help the churches. That is all we knew.” - Yet, that was not all he knew. Such dupery as this prevails in *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion* from seemingly godly men in their case to quarantine fellow co-workers in the Lord’s recovery.

The Maligning of John So’s Character over his signing the “Pledge” against Conscience

On page 38, *FPR*, Witness Lee states, “Furthermore, in his letter to me dated January 7, 1988, John So said that brother Benson Phillips proposed that we write a letter similar to that which the brothers in the States signed during the elders’ meeting in Orange County early 1986... In retrospect, [John So said] I regret that I signed that letter and was not faithful to follow conscience.”

John So - “Actually, shortly after all the brothers had signed such a letter in Orange County, we had some fellowship amongst us here to see if we should do the same, and we definitely felt it was not necessary, and even to some extent not right, to write such a letter. However, to keep the ‘one accord’, we agreed to Benson’s proposal.”

Witness Lee goes on to say:

The letter referred to here by John So was signed in the States by the brothers, including three brothers from the church in Stuttgart. Two of the three brothers signed the letter in February 1986 and also signed this letter, on which I am making my remarks, in May of the same year. Between the two signings there was only a short interval of three months. And, John So told me in his letter that “shortly after all the brothers had signed such a letter in Orange County [i.e., the letter signed by them on February 21, 1986], we had had some fellowship amongst us to see if we should do the same, and we definitely felt it was not necessary, and even to some extent, not right to write such a letter.” Since they had already had such a strong negative feeling concerning the signing of such a letter, why did two of the three brothers who had signed the letter in the States also sign, with John So, the letter of May 23, acting against their conscience? Could they give a reasonable and logical excuse for their action? If they acted so unreasonably and so illogically, how could others place their trust in them for co-laboring in the Lord’s work? John So offered the excuse that they signed the letter “in order to keep the ‘the one accord’”. It is not honest to be in one accord in a pretending way that is against one’s conscience. To be in one accord requires that we see the vision concerning the one accord. If one is void of such a vision, yet he pretends to be in one accord with others in order to please others, this is a falsehood, a deceiving behind a mask. It is no wonder that this one would fluctuate from pretending to opposing, and even to attacking others. Nonetheless, John So and sixty-three brothers did sign a letter that praised the five brothers’ fellowship with them to the uttermost, and later he said that he signed the letter against his conscience. Could one put in writing such high, praising words as are shown in this letter, in pretense, while *he is bothered in his conscience*? *Why was there no hint of the claimed crisis of conscience expressed then? Rather, John So’s remarks contradict his claim of conflict in his conscience.*”

I am sorry to say, Brother Lee was an expert at misconstruing another’s intention and obliterating the truth of the matter, and the person’s character in the process.

The Reasonable and Logical Explanation

John So explains,

I wrote to Brother Lee in January of 1988. At that time I told him I was wrong in signing that letter and had violated my conscience. And, I explained to him why. Because when all the brothers were there in the elders' meeting, February of 1986, signing that letter, including a couple of brothers from Germany, we brothers got together in Stuttgart and wondered if we should also follow the churches and sign such a letter? But we felt, "No it's not necessary. If we are really one—we are really one. There's no need to sign such a letter." And besides, people might think, you know what? Do you belong to Witness Lee? They will misunderstand us. So we said, "No, no no, we shouldn't sign it. It is not right." That doesn't mean we are against the one accord.

Please, please, this is the whole trouble, again—I want to say that we are believing so much that if something is said that is just a little bit different, this means, my goodness, this one or that one is against the one accord. Don't be like this, please. Let's learn something out of this. Don't have a chicken heart. Do you know what a chicken heart is? How big? It's a very small heart. It's a very small heart. And then if you still have the cardiosclerosis, that's it. That's the end. If you have a chicken heart, enlarge your heart, please. Let's enlarge our heart a little bit. What actually happened? What happened?

We five brothers got together, and finally one of them suggested at the end of our meeting, "Let's write such a letter to Witness Lee." My goodness, at that time they are promoting so much the one accord—it's not that we are against the one accord. I think that we were just as much for the one accord at that time as others, but we just felt that it is not so right to sign the letter, but we went ahead. We brothers said, "Let's sign it". I wrote to Witness Lee later and said, "For the sake of one accord we signed it". So we signed, we signed, but it really was not according to our feeling to sign such a letter.

I don't mean we were against the oneness. Please, you know that is the whole problem. We always try to misunderstand one another instead of understanding.

John So's explanation is both reasonable and logical, not deserved of severe condemnation. Yet, it is *not* John's word, the truth, which stands. It is Brother Lee's defaming characterization of John So that stands in that book of defamation - *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*.

Friction Was Crucial Between John So and Office

On page 40, *Fermentation*, Brother Lee says, "In the summer of 1986 there was friction between John So and the ministry office. The friction gradually worsened, and it reached its height at the end of 1986...I did not consider the matters I was then aware of and that caused the friction as something crucial."

The friction was indeed crucial, which included, (The following is from John So's 32-page report broken down into outline form)

1. The LSM brothers' declared objective to bring John So and brothers in Europe into line with the office, which meant with Philip Lee
2. John So rejecting the proposal to report everything to the office, to Philip Lee, as Brother

- Lee's "number one co-worker"
3. John's realizing the double standard of the office as a printing and distribution entity and as an entity they must report their activities to
 4. John's encountering for the first time the contemptuous reaction of Philip Lee to John's lack of cooperation with him (i.e., LSM). [Everything was to go downhill from here - Ed]
 - a) Philip Lee stopping the German language printing operation in Stuttgart
 - b) And refusing to cooperate with the German printers to have their materials printed in Anaheim
 5. John trying to contact Philip Lee by letter or in person, even going to Irving to secure contact, but not being able to talk to him, and also being ignored by Ray Graver
 6. A year and 5 months of this frustrating development in which they could not do their own printing of 4100 camera-ready pages, but had to wait on Philip who never did respond to their need
 7. Hearing from a well-regarded brother in the Taipei training that the statistics during the training for baptisms were false
 8. Going through red tape at the Taipei training to be able to leave to go back home, which ultimately involved the directive to call Philip Lee for permission
 9. John So's friction with LSM included Philip Lee's controlling, manipulating antics to make life miserable for John So and the young people from Stuttgart, who became perplexed and angered at the treatment they received
 - a) Shunning the German young people in Anaheim on their way to the Irving training, giving no hospitality
 - b) In Irving, casting doubt into the minds of the Stuttgart trainees as to whether or not they could attend the training at all
 - c) Disciplining them by requiring them to sit in a special section in the back and to wear red tags to show everyone they were being disciplined (for what?)
 10. The friction included being shocked by an upheaval in England and Stuttgart when young people returned from an Irving training led by Philip Lee
 - a) There were attacks against John So in England and Stuttgart, undermining him while he was away in Taipei
 1. In an unplanned early return to Stuttgart from the training in Taipei, John found that trouble had come into his locality, as well as to the churches in England from the young people who had been in Irving
 - b) Returning young people were saying strange things
 1. "Stuttgart and John So are resisting the activities of the ministry"
 2. "John So is controlling, withholding tapes of the Living Stream Ministry and not distributing them to other churches, and the German publishers are not cooperating either, so the blessing has not come to England"
 - c) Therefore, Living Stream Ministry set up a brother in England
 1. To be the head of the Living Stream operation
 2. This brother caused big problems to the churches in England
 11. Friction between John So and the office continued after Bill Kirkham wrote a letter to Brother Lee requesting him to clear up the problems caused by LSM, saying, "In your recent letter to us in Great Britain you told us that we should not follow a man, nor should there be any intrinsic element of exalting any human being or promoting any movement, so that the enemy will have no ground to damage the Lord's recovery with discord any longer. But now here in England the situation is just contrary to what you have said. It is being strongly promoted that we must follow brother Philip

Lee absolutely, 100%, and while serving in Living Stream affairs, we should serve in complete obedience without asking any questions. And it was shared that the church life is not up to the standard of the kingdom, but that the office is, so if you want to be in the kingdom life, you should come and serve in the office.”

- a) Bill expressed his desire that nothing would come between the churches
 - 1. Saying in a letter to John So, “I strongly pray that nothing will come between the churches in Europe to cause damage to the Lord’s testimony”
 - 2. Saying in his letter to Brother Lee, “In all the years of the Lord’s recovery in Europe, we have never had any shadow of division between England and Germany, but now we are hearing things that will cause such a division.”
- b) Brother Lee’s reply to Bill’s grievous letter
 - 1. It would be wise and profitable not to make an issue of anything
 - 2. However, one thing solid I would like to let you know: The Living Stream does feel burdened to set up a little branch office in London for the distribution of both the video and audio tapes in UK and the continent.
- c) John So response
 - 1. What would you think if you received such a letter?
 - 2. In the meantime, the whole church in Blackpool was destroyed to the ground [by LSM operatives, especially the one in London, mentioned previously - *Ed.*]. Destroyed to the ground. One sister wept continuously for eight to nine months.
 - 3. Nothing was done to rectify any situation and meanwhile LSM was still boasting about continuing at that time for “the furtherance of the Lord’s move”
 - 4. And am I rebelling? Conspiring? Are we rebelling in Stuttgart? Only the Lord knows who is really conspiring

Brother Lee said he didn’t consider the friction between John So and the office as something crucial. Yet, it was crucial, and then added to this problem later was 1) John’s increased awareness of LSM’s interferences in other places in the recovery, 2) knowledge of Philip Lee’s moral misconduct in the office and the LSM’s covering up of the same, and 3) Brother Lee’s non-action to requests from John So and the brothers in Europe for him to deal with the interferences and damage caused by LSM in their localities.

In the first part of his disassociation letter to Brother Lee, John summarizes the problems that led to his departure, not mentioning specifically the friction he had with Philip Lee, which went a long way toward supplanting John So.

John’s So’s Experiences Culminate in Disassociation Letter

It has come to our attention recently through several witnesses that gross immorality and some other sins mentioned in 1 Corinthians 5:11 have been committed by your son Philip Lee (who is identified as your Ministry Office) on more than one occasion over a long period of time. This deeply disturbs us. It grieves us even more that you and some of your close co-workers were aware of the situation and yet not only tolerated it but covered it up. What is worse is that, while this was happening, you and your co-workers were promoting and exalting him to the extent that he was able to intervene in the churches’ affairs in recent years. The peak of this promotion was evident at your elders’ training in Taipei in June 1987. Some of your co-workers were not only themselves under the influence and control of Philip Lee, but were also openly bringing elders and young people of many local churches to come under the

same influence and control in your name and for your sake. The five brothers whom you and your Office sent to Europe in your place in May 1986 were trying to do the same here. Our young people who went to your training in Taipei have also testified of the same.

At the time Brother Lee spoke the messages that comprise *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*, he knew all about John's basic problems with him and with LSM. John made the matters clear to him through letters and by personal contact. Yet in his book on the *Fermentation* this truth is not told; John So is depicted as one who suddenly and mysteriously changed, becoming "rebellious" and "a leader of a conspiracy".

Comment about Baptisms in Germany

Also on page 40 of *FPR*, John So is quoted about the baptizing of people in Germany. John said that if the saints tried to baptize people there, they themselves would get baptized by them. This was supposed to be a sign that he was a rebellious one, speaking against aspects of the new way. He pointed out, though, that he and others baptized people themselves in bathtubs in Germany twenty years before, so he had no problem with that concept. His concern was for the combination of door-knocking and baptizing in the German neighborhoods, where people were warned concerning them by the newspaper. Therefore, John said that the saints in Germany might get baptized by the people. It was not going to work for them to practice this aspect of the new way.

Also on page 40 on the baptisms, it says that John told a brother that what Brother Lee was doing in Taipei was for Taipei, but that he, John, had to consider the situation of the whole world. John relates,

If you get into the context of what I'm trying to tell our dear young brother, Jim Batten, it is that this may work in Taipei, but we have to consider that the situation of each part of the earth, of the world, may not be the same. Suppose you go to a Moslem country, Saudi Arabia, and you go door knocking, you might lose your head! That's what I mean. But you see, if you manipulate just one word, my goodness, you will think, "My, John So thought Witness Lee is just caring for that little Taipei, but John So cares for the whole world."

These quotes were used to prove that something was fermenting in me. It is printed here that fermenting John So is opposing the training. I'm sorry, brother, but if this is a testimony against me, I think those responsible will have to deal with it before the Lord. It has been printed now and sent to the whole world.

What was printed in *Fermentation* reads this way,

John So first became critical during his first visit to Taipei in October 1986, only one and a half months after the start of the first term of the full-time training. In that visit, John stayed in Taipei for ten days. During his stay he said that what the training did in the way of baptizing people could be done in Taipei, but that if such a thing were done in Germany, the people there would baptize them instead. He also said that what Brother Lee was doing in the training in Taipei was just for Taipei, but that he, John, had to consider the situation of the whole world. (Witness Lee, p. 40)

John So could not escape the scrutiny and subjugating mentality of LSM in 1986 and each year following, up through the time *Fermentation* was written in 1990.

Criticisms by John So Not Denied

Many times in *Fermentation* when criticisms of Brother Lee were referred to, their validity was not denied; they were just brought up to seemingly prove that someone was "attacking" and not in accord with "the move".

Page 41 of *Fermentation* says that

John went on to criticize those for taking the lead in the training, blaming them for stirring people up, saying that their reporting to Brother Lee was deliberately misleading, that the true situation was being kept from Brother Lee, and that there were problems with the new way, but that this was kept from Brother Lee.

A good soldier in the army would not criticize. But by October 1986, John So was being regulated by his conscience, not by the rules for soldiers in the new way, and he was forced to make serious assessments according to his experience that year. As he said, "I am not a piece of wood; I have feeling."

Brother Lee ran into a problem with people who had feeling. The philosophy of *not caring for right and wrong* and *not making an issue of anything* has rendered many brothers void of human feeling, dull in conscience, and insensitive to injustices to their brothers in Christ. It was hard for those with feeling of conscience to be in one accord with such ones, and vice versa.

Concerning John's observation about stirring up people, Paul Hon received the most severe public rebuke by Brother Lee at the Taipei training in October 1987 for stirring up the flesh of the trainees one year *after* John So's observation. Had Brother Lee been more accessible and open to fellowship, such fleshly exhibitions and displays of immature leadership from his trainers would have been caught sooner. It is noteworthy that Brother Lee was either sick or working on the Chinese Recovery Version the majority of his time in Taipei, while Paul Hon, Jake Jacobson, and others, were taking the lead as trainers under the supervision of Philip Lee, of all people! This left plenty of ground for brothers with feeling to express their legitimate concerns as responsible brothers to the Lord in the recovery.

"Criticism at Dinner" with Lin Rong and Howard Higashi

On page 41 of *Fermentation*, Brother Lee mentions another report of John So's "criticism" of the training: "The night before he [John So] left Taipei, he spoke to a leading elder and a co-worker during dinner and criticized the training again." John So responds, saying,

The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion mentioned Howard Higashi and Lin Rong. When I was there in Taipei, they invited me for dinner. Shortly before I was leaving, do you think I would be so stupid to tell them to their face, I'm rebelling, if that is what I was going to do? I'm not that stupid yet. I am not that clever but I still have some sense in me. You know, I was trying to think back, "What did I do there with Lin Rong and Howard

Higashi that caused a problem with them?” Then I began to realize that maybe I told them my burden was for the high schoolers. I just gave them a little suggestion that maybe it would be important and quite easy to gain all the high schoolers also. “My, you are not in a position, you are not following the burden of the ministry now.” My goodness, you cannot expect me to go to Taipei without opening my mouth and say a little bit of my feeling. I am not a piece of wood here.

It is quite possible that John So did not enter Taipei without a “warning” going before him to the brothers in Taipei that John had not cooperated with the five brothers who had gone to Stuttgart to get him lined up with Philip Lee. In such a case, the antennae of Howard and Lin Rong might have been oversensitive. It is also possible John So was critical without realizing it. Lin Rong and Howard, themselves, might have become more honest, and “critical”, if they had passed through the trial that John had experienced before coming to Taipei.

Some England Saints Bothered by John’s Speaking

After leaving the training in Taipei, John discovered that an upheaval had occurred in England and young trainees returning from their training in Irving were making attacks on him. John then spent some time in England in November 1986. *Fermentation* says on page 41 that “some saints were quite bothered about John’s speaking in private” and a few came to Brother Lee and asked him what they should do. This is all Brother Lee says about this. He doesn’t talk about what John said to these saints and whether or not what he disclosed to them was true and worthy of concern.

During 1986 Philip Lee traveled back and forth between Irving and Taipei “helping trainers”. He was in Irving when John So was in the training in Taipei. The young saints from England, whom John So had encouraged to go to Irving, returned and launched an attack on him, an attack spawned in Irving during a training supervised by Philip Lee.

It was known by many elders and co-workers that if Philip became upset with them due to their lack of cooperation with him or show of absoluteness “for the ministry”, reprisals could be expected. Reprisals came to John So and perhaps he shared some things of his experience with the saints from England.

Two Unfavorable Matters

On page 41 in *Fermentation*, Brother Lee says, “during the summer of 1986, an arrangement was made between the brothers in Stuttgart and the Living Stream Ministry office to have the German books printed in Irving. At the same time, the Living Stream Ministry also decided to set up a branch office in England. These two matters were viewed unfavorably by John.” John sent two letters to Brother Lee to “express his unhappiness with that arrangement”.

John So shares the background that gives us understanding of his unhappiness,

I didn’t realize it at first, but as time went by I could see that we had problems with “the office” because we lacked cooperation with the manager of the office. Listen to this, dear saints. When I encouraged the brothers to follow the office and to cooperate with the office one hundred percent, I meant it. And we did. The office, however, began to behave in a strange way. They wanted us to stop printing books and send all of the camera-ready pages to Irving. There they would print the books and send their finished work back to us, which according to our feeling, was not logical. The Germans are very logical people, you know, and this was not logical because we have the whole facilities

right there in Stuttgart, right next to our meeting hall. It's just like in the kitchen: You knead the dough. Afterwards, you pull out the dough and the oven is right there to bake the bread. But we were only able to knead the dough, we just couldn't bake the bread! We had to send the dough, the kneaded dough, somewhere. To South Africa, I don't know where, to America, and then they will bake the bread and send it to us. For a German mind, this is a little bit illogical. You know that the Germans are very systematic; they are very logical. We did it, though, believe it or not, we did it. In fact, at that time, some brothers were slightly irritated. I told them, I said, "Brothers, listen, all the books bear Witness Lee's name, he is the author. It does not matter where the books are printed." You may not believe that we sent within a year and five months over 4100 camera-ready pages to be printed, and we did not receive a response. We did not get at that time one page printed, nothing...nothing...!

In fact, brothers, in spite of our sending already at that time so many pages and yet we heard not one word, the brothers wrote a letter to Philip Lee on March 2, 1987. Let me just read a little bit. "Dear brother Philip: We would like to fellowship with you briefly regarding the future publication of the ministry in European languages here." So we reported to LSM all of our activities pending at that time, and we wanted to finish that work, then ask them what we should do next. You see, when I say "follow the office", I meant what Witness Lee publicly said about the office, that it is for book distribution, etc. Anyway, the brothers wrote to Philip Lee because Witness Lee had said, "Please don't come to me concerning the books. Concerning the books, you all have to go to my son, Philip Lee." So they wrote to him. Our letter stated, "We are concluding the translation work of the following books which were started earlier and we hope to complete them by the end of April: Life-study of John, Message 1 to 51, Life-study of Hebrews, Message 1 to 69, Life-study of Romans, Message 1 to 31, Life-study of Philippians, Message 1 to 31. We would appreciate your fellowship with us concerning the books we should start working on after this time. If you have the time to see us, we would be happy to meet with you for further fellowship. We hope to hear from you soon." The brothers were even willing to go all the way to Anaheim to see Philip to coordinate with the office concerning the books. No reply. This is written on March 2, 1987. Until this very day we did not receive a reply from this person, from the manager of the LSM office.

Then Neuchatel was afraid that their books would also be boycotted in Switzerland so they quickly called and called and called the LSM office. That was in June or July. They called and finally in September they got the answer from Benny Danker. "Yes, yes, you may print your Italian and French books in Switzerland under one condition." Uh? "That they are not to be printed in Stuttgart." My goodness. "And if you cannot print them in Switzerland, send them back to Irving. We'll print them for you."

When the brothers in Stuttgart heard that, it was firstly up to here, then it was up to here. Now it was up to here. Finally, it was up to here. They said, that's it. This is a proof that they intentionally want to give us trouble.

What happened? They wrote a letter to Witness Lee in December 1987. I'll read to you that letter of December 1987.

Dear brothers,

Since December of last year 1986 we have sent you a total of approximately 4190 camera-ready pages of the following materials which concluded our translation projects started over two years ago, etc, etc. [Those are the Life-Studies and Truth Lessons, etc.] Until the present, we have not heard any word from your office. However, we did hear that the Living Stream Ministry and Benson Phillips have told brother Vincent Jornod of Neuchatel emphatically not to have their French books printed in Stuttgart but in Switzerland. In view of the

above facts we see no need to continue operation of the Verlag-der Strom (which is the German publishers.) We therefore kindly ask you to pay the cost of translation, correction, and proofreading, computer typing, paste-up work, phototypesetting, materials, and utilities which amount to DM 137,026.50 Please remit payment as soon as possible to the following account so that we could cover our debts accumulated due to the above mentioned work and close our books properly according to government regulations here.

Signed Gert Reimer and Jim Frit-Fritz cc Witness Lee

(We sent them this. What do you expect me to do? What do you expect the brothers in Stuttgart to do?)

Brother Lee did respond to the brothers request and paid the money, but in his book he merely says that “John So and the German publishers asked for DM\$137,026.50” and that he sent the money to them immediately. He gives no information to the reader for the reason why the publishers asked for the money and that they were, in fact, closing shop due to their ruptured relationship with LSM. Brother Lee also did not provide information about John So’s two-year long ordeal with LSM that ended with the Verlag’s request for the payment to finalize business with each other. The way the matter is presented in *Fermentation* the payment might be understood to have been a gift to the German publishers “to help” their situation, rather than as money owed to them at the culmination of two years of abandonment of LSM support and cooperation that contributed to the demise of the Verlag Der Strom, as well as to the church in Stuttgart and John So.

This unfavorable matter that Brother Lee referred to was a shame to him and to his office; yet, he doesn’t admit this in *Fermentation* and explain to people why John would be unfavorable with the new printing arrangement. Rather, he uses this printing arrangement example to show that John was uncooperative, supposedly supplying further “proof” that he was in rebellion.

Witness Lee - While we were holding the 1987 Winter Training in Irving, I received a copy of a letter from Verlag Der Strom (the bookroom of the church in Stuttgart) written to the ministry office. Since it was a copy I realized that it was written for business and that it should be taken care of by the ministry office. Therefore, I did not take care of it. After I came back to Anaheim and cleared up all my necessary work, I had a little time to read that copy. I found out that Verlag Der Strom asked my office for the payment of DM\$137,026.50. I immediately called John So and sent the full amount to them on that day, in the hope that it would help the situation then. I also asked John whether they still needed more cash and told him that if they did, I would send it to him. He told me that there was no need (p. 60, *FPR*).

Brother Lee knew the matter was serious since Strom was closing their doors. He wanted them to continue and did strive with John So for them to stay in operation. Therefore, his response to their letter was quick and kind-hearted; it was also too late. John shares,

I told you I wrote this letter to Witness Lee. At the same time, the Verlag wrote a letter to Witness Lee, and he got both of these letters. Then he called me in March, the end of March. Three times he called me. We had a long talk each time.

Listen, in the last conversation Brother Lee really did his best to convince me, and he did pay for the publishing work and apologized for what LSM had done.

The other unfavorable matter Brother Lee mentioned, concerning LSM's setting up a branch in England, is covered in the following phone conversation between Brother Lee and John So.

Telephone Conversation With Brother Lee

John So - In a telephone conversation with Brother Lee, April 4, 1988, I was supposed to tell him certain things for the brothers after fellowshipping with them. I said, "The brothers were encouraged that you called, but actually no one has the heart to talk about all the things. They want you to know that the whole issue was never to cut off fellowship with you. "

I told him, "The brothers said they accepted your apology concerning all the troubles caused by your office in relation to the Verlag publishers and LSM, although they did find it hard to believe that you didn't know what was going on." Witness Lee had continually said that he didn't know. Of course, I'm sorry, I still don't believe he didn't know. Okay? If he could sit there and know the "conspiracy" in the whole world, my goodness, from the North Pole to the South Pole, east and west, he knows the whole conspiracy and then he doesn't know what his office is doing? I don't believe that too much anymore. Maybe at that time I believed it, but now I'm sorry to say, I don't believe that too much. Maybe a little bit. Maybe. If I try my best.

I told Brother Lee, "because the brothers who came here in May 1986 assured us that everything that went on in the office is in close fellowship with you, the brothers here find it hard to believe that you didn't know anything about what was going on. They really assured us." Brother Lee, in answer to that said it is not true that everything that went on in the office is in close fellowship with him. Okay. So, you judge if it is or it is not. I don't know who is telling the truth. I don't know.

Nevertheless, we accepted his apology. Brother Lee asked me to convey to the brothers what he said several times to me on the phone, that it was in his heart that they should not close down the Verlag, but continue printing. The brothers responsible for the Verlag acknowledged this request but they can only do this now on a very, very small scale because all of them, except one, have already gone back to work. We already closed down at that time.

Arrangement for LSM branch office in England

John So spoke further regarding Brother Lee's apology.

The brothers from England were also there, and they told me to tell Brother Lee that since his LSM branch office in England has caused so much trouble, the brothers in England requested that he do something in writing. Not for an apology. They don't even want an apology from Witness Lee, but they did want him to clear up the things that were spread in order to restore fellowship among the brothers in the churches.

John So's unhappiness with this arrangement had to do with the power that LSM exercised in Europe with Philip Lee in the control seat, pulling strings from the office of Living Stream. Chris Lee was the brother set up in England to bring the churches under the control of LSM and Philip Lee. The brothers from Europe and one from South Africa can testify of the damage wrought by this one brother. John So naturally would be unhappy with the arrangement to control the churches and spread LSM influence in this way among the churches in England.

The two unfavorable matters to John So that Brother Lee referred to - the German printing in Irving and the LSM branch office in England - were both control issues that contributed to the demise of John So and the European churches.

John So Supposedly Disagreed with Brother Lee Visit

Brother Lee offered to go to Stuttgart in spring of 1988 but said in *Fermentation* that John would not agree for him to come. John explains, providing the important detail,

Brother Lee wanted to come, and I told Brother Lee that the brothers are not against his coming but that they feel now is not the right time. I said nobody likes to bring up all the things again which is not good for both you and us. It's better to wait for a little time until things cool down. The brothers were afraid of opening old wounds.

In *Fermentation*, however, Brother Lee doesn't say this. He gives people a different and wrong impression instead, saying,

In the same phone conversation I also told John So that I would go in the spring of 1988 to fulfill my promise to finish the speaking on the second half of God's New Testament economy and to satisfy their repeated invitations to me through the past three years that I might finish the speaking on God's New Testament economy. But he would not agree (p. 60-61, FPR).

John So responds,

Witness Lee tells people that I would not agree, as if we didn't want him to come at all. He even said to me, "If you feel that it is better that I visit later, it's okay. According to my schedule I have time at the end of May or the beginning of June. I also could come after the summer training." I told Brother Lee that I would fellowship with the brothers and that I would be in Anaheim in July and talk about it with him.

Fluctuation in John So's Testimony

On page 41 in *FPR*, in spite of John's troubles at that point, he wrote in a letter January 11, 1987 that "all can surely testify that neither you nor your office have ever controlled us in the past in any way." John was still being positive with Brother Lee in spite of the control he experienced in 1986 by LSM and was obviously referring to the past wherein he experienced no control by LSM, when the office had the sole function of printing and distributing LSM materials. He couldn't testify that about the present months of the double standard of the office, wherein something more was expected of him and he surely did experience LSM trying to exercise control over him. The fluctuation in his testimony about LSM control was due to the change in LSM's behavior toward John. He has related in detail his experience of their change in behavior and expectation. John talks about his "fluctuation" in testimony that Brother Lee refers to in *FPR*.

Witness Lee should know about the fluctuation. Why? My goodness, if he knows about the consideration of the whole earth, this is a little matter. He should know why there was a fluctuation. The fluctuation was due to the new expectation "the office" had for us, which we could not cooperate with.

Also on page 41 of *FPR* Brother Lee continues his critical analysis of John So, saying,

After the summer of 1987, reports from Europe indicating that John's speaking was causing concern began to reach me again. His criticism covered a wider area. Brothers

who had contacted him began to speak critically, saying, that “we need the ministry, but we should not exalt it”; that “Brother Lee is being uplifted”; that “we do not need to speak appreciatively of any brother”; and that “there is an emphasizing of the ministry office against the principle that we should only emphasize Christ and the church”. With reference to the number of people baptized through door knocking during the summer of 1987 in Anaheim, John said to a brother in England that it was better to have one’s own body than to have a Rolls Royce. In other words, door knocking was likened to a car, and the church was likened to a man’s body.

Concerning the last criticism, John was trying to impress upon a brother that the church in Blackpool was suffering (due to LSM interferences) and brothers and sisters were in need of help. He did not discourage the brother from the new way; rather John expressed favor with the new way. He merely wanted to encourage the brother to care for the church and not forget its value, while he engaged himself in the door knocking activity of the new way.

The other criticisms by John So that Brother Lee mentioned (in his quote above from p. 41, *FPR*) were actually reasonable concerns that were shared by many others in the recovery, including brothers and sisters still in the recovery today. Brother Lee, once again, did not deny the points John So made. He simply referred to them as criticisms.

On page 42 of *FPR*, Brother Lee mentions a leading brother who began to speak about “there being more than one group of apostles in the New Testament” and that “each had his ministry”. Since this leading one had just talked to John So, it was assumed John had spoken this word to him about the apostles. Certainly John was seeking answers to the perplexing situation he faced and looked to the Lord and His Word in response to the pervading influence of LSM into localities in Europe.

Brother Lee goes on to say that “John began to turn his private disagreement into open criticism of the ministry, and was trying to influence others to agree with him. All this shows that there was a fermentation during that time in Europe under John So’s speaking.”

John So considers an altogether different source for the fermentation in Europe.

The Fermentation Work in Europe

John So said in his Manila report, “Let me ask our dear Brother Lee, who is conspiring? Yes, somebody is conspiring. And rebellion is fermenting, but what is the source of this fermentation in the recovery?”

In Bill Kirkham’s letter to Brother Lee, Bill describes problems and the source of fermentation in England. He knew that the fermenting did not come from John So, rather it came *to* John So and *to* Bill Kirkham and *to* their localities. As an elder in the church in Blackpool, Bill expressed his concern to Brother Lee for 1) the LSM brother designated to carry out the plans of LSM in England, who was interfering with the churches and causing damage, avoiding proper fellowship with Bill and other leaders 2) lies that were being spread about John So, the German publishers, and the church in Stuttgart. Bill Kirkham told Brother Lee, “In all the years of the Lord’s recovery in Europe, we have never had any shadow of division between here and Germany, but now we are hearing things that will cause such a division.”

John So had experienced 1) the German publishers being cut off during a long ordeal with LSM to get pages printed 2) hearing the negative reports about him and his locality from the

young people's training in Taipei and Irving 3) the German young people being shunned in Anaheim and disciplined unjustifiably in Irving 4) the negative outbreak in England about him, the church in Stuttgart, and the Strom publishers by trainees returning to England from Irving while he was in Taipei.

A Brother Corrects Fermentation Error

A brother who was used in *Fermentation* to testify of the so-called conspiracy in the recovery, but left the recovery in 2000 was compelled to speak the truth, according to his experience and understanding of the real situation. He says,

I would like to clear up one point: You once made reference to my testimony as published in that terrible *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*. It contained several errors of interpretation of my verbal testimony. Nobody had the courtesy to ask my permission to publish it, nor did anyone warn me of the forthcoming publication. And when you think of it, if you would delete my contribution, the conspiracy theory looks rather thin.

My testimony finally provided the "proof" Witness Lee had required to show that there was indeed a worldwide "rebellion". It was no rebellion. The brothers [in Europe] had just had enough of Philip Lee's bullying and Witness Lee's covering up. That infamous brothers' meeting in Stuttgart was arranged with one purpose: to draw the line and to convey to Witness Lee in no uncertain terms that they had had enough and they refused to have any further dealings and/or communications with Witness Lee or his office. Call it a "rebellion" if you want, but it was no rebellion. They just drew the line and cut the ties. Period.

You remember the "mercy seats" assigned to the German full-timers coming from Taipei – when Philip refused them training seats for no apparent reason, but most likely out of spitefulness and probably because of the strained relationship he had personally cultivated with the brothers in Europe and this was further "punishment" to show who was in control. It was only after Jorn Uhlenbruck had complained to Witness Lee, that Philip Lee relented and gave them special name tags and assigned them special "mercy seats" at the back of the hall. During the meeting when the brothers were present for John So's discussion on the telephone with Witness Lee, John mentioned these mercy seats and that Witness Lee had flatly denied any knowledge of any such thing. That was when Jorn became so angry and shouted, "He knew, he knew! I told him myself!" So, in that case, Witness Lee had definitely lied by denying any prior knowledge.

The whole debacle when the churches in Europe decided to sever their ties with Witness Lee was primarily and solely over the attitude and treatment they had received from Witness Lee's office, i. e., Philip Lee. In fact, when somebody in that Stuttgart meeting pointed out that should they sever ties with Witness Lee's office, it effectively meant severing ties with Witness Lee himself, the general feeling among the leading ones was simply, that it is his problem. The severing of ties was also over Witness Lee's constant denial of having any knowledge of whatever problem was brought to him. There was thus the bigger question: Was Philip Lee in charge or was Witness Lee lying, or was it both? John So said to me at the time: How can an 84 year-old father control a 54 year-old son? The brothers in Europe were angry, bitter, disappointed, disillusioned, and heartbroken: the very thing for which they had devoted all their time, all their effort, and all their energy was destroyed by two seemingly callous people who cared nothing about their hurt.

These brothers had had enough of Witness Lee and his office dominating and manipulating them. One evening in Stuttgart, a sad and forlorn Vincent Jornod from Neuchatel, spent more than two hours detailing to me aspects of how they had suffered

so much under the hands of their formerly respected senior co-worker [Witness Lee] and his "office". (This brother asked not to be identified.)

A Basic Problem With Brother Lee's Trust

On page 42, *FPR*, Brother Lee shares that John So contacted saints in the Southeast and that he talked to one brother for over four hours expressing to him the matters he was bothered with and that he also began to communicate with John Ingalls and others in Southern California by telephone. He says that "By all this it is evident that the fermentation that was taking place in Hong Kong and Europe began to work in the United States" and that "during that entire period of time they kept these communications from me. I did not know then that they were working actively behind my back."

Brother Lee did not trust his co-workers, men of God, who were serving God. But he did trust Philip Lee, who served himself. It seems that no one had a witness in their spirit that Philip was serving God. This was a person of temper and lust, not a man of God. There was, then, a basic problem with Brother Lee's trust, with his suspicion, and also with his respect for his genuine co-workers and their sight, fellowship, and function in the recovery. John So and Joseph Fung actually had spiritual experience, knowledge, and standing in the Body of Christ that others could recognize. Who was Philip Lee? Why was he trusted and not these brothers?

Bill Mallon Became Negative in the Fall of 1987

Brother Lee states on page 43 of *FPR* that Bill Mallon began to become negative in the fall of 1987. He shares in this way about Bill:

After months of staying away from the church life and the church meetings, he began to contact the saints. He told others that "something very serious was going on in the recovery" and that he was issuing a warning "because of its potential danger," with the result that eventually Brother Lee may have to pull out of the U. S."; that "control" was being exercised by the Living Stream Ministry; that the "human will" was being "usurped"; and that "immorality" was present. Thus, by the fall of 1987, a fermentation had developed in the United States in various parts of the country.

It seems that Bill spoke quite reasonably according to the situation that existed at that time. Concerning his staying away from the church life and the church meetings, Brother Lee did likewise in Anaheim for two years, saying at one point, "I am disappointed with the church in Anaheim". The brothers wondered why he didn't come to the meetings. Bill Mallon was actually depressed in large part due to LSM interferences and their circumventing of fellowship with him. During his time away from the church, He did, however, attend any elders' trainings and fellowship and was sensitive to the saints' and elders' feeling about him.

Brother Lee asserted in *FPR* that fermentation had developed in various parts of the country. He was apparently unaware of the fermentation and corruption stemming from his own office that became pervasive in the recovery and in Atlanta through his own son and LSM co-workers.

No Conspiracy Developed in 1987

On page 43 of *FPR*, Brother Lee says,

This fermentation eventually developed into a conspiracy in the fall of 1987. Brothers from different parts of the country began working together in an undermining way to exert

influence on other leading ones. All this was done privately. Around that time, John Ingalls visited Bill Mallon in Atlanta. Bill brought him out to the countryside and spent a few days with him and eventually convinced him of his dissenting views and thus gained him.

There was no conspiracy, but there were brothers who showed responsibility and concern about developments in the recovery. There was with these brothers no “working together in an undermining way” but there was a speaking and acting according to their conviction of conscience. To charge Bill Mallon with convincing John Ingalls and thus gaining him is to misrepresent Bill and to ignore his plight with LSM.

John had been so positive for the ministry and for Brother Lee that it took several things that were happening in the recovery, and to him, to “convince” him and eventually cause him to have a change. His testimony in his book bears this out.

When John Ingalls came back from his visit with Bill in Atlanta, he was much more aware of the serious problems in the recovery, which is why he began to have a change. He went almost immediately to Godfred Otuteye, a fellow elder in Anaheim, to have fellowship with him about Philip Lee. Both Bill Mallon and John Ingalls were justifiably concerned about Philip and his growing influence in the recovery. Although the brothers were not *conspiring*, Brother Lee says in *FPR*, “when John came back to Orange County from Atlanta, he began to play an active role in this conspiracy” (p. 51, *FPR*.)

Brother Lee felt that John’s contacting of brothers to have fellowship with them about serious and legitimate concerns was part of the conspiracy. John’s concerns included addressing the immoral activity of Philip Lee in the office of the Living Stream, as well as Philip’s increased involvement in the work. A big issue was made in *FPR* about John Ingalls divulging the immoral behavior of Philip to other brothers. No issue was made, however, of Philip’s immoral behavior and its corrupting effect on elders and saints everywhere, and no issue was made of his interferences in the churches. Instead, John Ingalls was the one condemned severely in *FPR* by Dan Towle, Gene Gruhler, and Witness Lee.

On page 51 of *FPR*, Gene Gruhler says that John Ingalls mentioned a number of items to him:

“One was that the Taipei training should be shut down. Another was that the manager of the Living Stream Ministry office should be fired. He also said that the churches had now become for the ministry instead of the ministry being for the churches, and the new way was not the way to build up the churches.” This last comment by Gene is inconsistent with John Ingalls’ stated position concerning the new way, which John actually supported in principle and as he told Brother Lee, and others at other times.

Gene’s other comments were concerning issues that were troublesome to many, which invoked the coming together of brothers to fellowship. Concerning Philip Lee getting fired, does Gene suggest that would not be unreasonable? Gene knew of the sinful behavior of Philip ten years prior and brought the matter up with Brother Lee, saying, “what are we going to do about him?” It was an issue that bothered Gene, and other elders, at that time. But he didn’t show that he was bothered in the late eighties.

In the late eighties Gene did in *FPR*, as Brother Lee and Dan Towle also did, he made it look like an attack was being made on Philip, while not affirming or denying the concern about him.

All three of these brothers were not righteous and transparent in dealing with the truth of Philip Lee's immoral conduct. They let the issue be cloudy, as it still is today. As a result, certain elders in or outside Anaheim have spoken falsely in their defense of Philip Lee and of Brother Lee's responsibility in the matter. In doing so, they cover both Philip and Brother Lee in the unrighteous muddle, while misrepresenting those who have tried to speak the truth.

Brother Lee Likened to a Pope

On page 71, *FPR*, Brother Lee says, "John So was speaking in Dublin in which he 'likened me to a pope'". Many would agree with this assessment. (See appendix 1) Hudson Taylor of the China Inland Mission was also likened to a pope. He was known as "the little pope of the Orient" since he answered to no one regarding plans, policy making, and decisions for the China Inland Mission. Men get their reputation for a reason.

"Church life has gone downhill"

On page 71, *FPR*, it says, John So "claimed that since 1976, the church life has gone downhill."

This is what Brother Lee himself spoke also, publicly to the church and privately to brothers, only he put the date at 1974. Why does Brother Lee enter this as a criticism of John So, saying he "claimed" this? Brother Lee claimed this too. John Ingalls shared,

Monday morning, December 14, [1987] we came again to Brother Lee's home. After some brief prayer, Brother Lee gave his analysis of our past history, leading to the very low rate of increase in recent years – in the U.S., in Taiwan, and in Germany. It was at this point that he admitted that the emphasis on increase in the past had brought trouble. He felt that we had a good start in the U.S., which reached a high point in 1969-70. Then we lost it. The migrations were the factor. In Los Angeles all the saints were concentrated in one place and under the proper leadership. But when the migrations came, what was gained in Los Angeles was lost. In 1974 he had the burden to put out the life-studies, and for twelve years he focused on that, neglecting the proper care of the churches. This also accounted for the loss and poor condition.

Anaheim Annual Corporate Meeting

Brother Lee states on page 71 of *FPR*,

On March 5, 1989, the church in Anaheim had their annual corporate meeting. In spite of efforts to replace Minoru Chen, a director of the corporation, with another young brother sympathetic to their views, the final vote was 195 for Minoru and 69 for the other brother. This was a clear indication to John Ingalls that the majority of the church would not go along with him. As a result, on March 19, both John and Al withdrew from the eldership in Anaheim on their own accord.

This is Brother Lee's official word that he spoke publicly and that is now in print. He spoke what he apparently believed, but once again he did not represent the brothers accurately. John Ingalls shares the actual situation:

There were three directors who, according to the by-laws, served a three-year term on a rotational basis, meaning that every year one of the directors terms expired, and he must be either re-elected or replaced at the annual business meeting. The custom was to re-elect the one whose term expired, and it was always accomplished without any problem.

Minoru Chen, Al Knoch, and myself were the directors. The one whose term expired that year was Minoru Chen, a brother who was transferred by Brother Lee from the church in Huntington Beach and appointed an elder in the church in Anaheim in March 1986. Most of the saints were aware that it was he whose term expired and that he must be considered for re-election. Now the problem to a number of saints was that he was an elder who stood strongly for Brother Lee's leadership, whereas those saints did not, and they would like to see him replaced. The rest of the saints desperately desired to see Minoru in that position. Such an abnormal and divided condition we had never experienced before.

The business meeting and election were to take place on the Lord's Day, March 5th. On Thursday evening, March 2nd, Al and I met with Minoru Chen and Philip Lim to discuss the agenda for the business meeting. Minoru made a point very strongly that according to our custom the directors should always be elders. In fact, without our knowledge, in the preceding Lord's Day meeting on the Chinese-speaking side, Minoru had educated the saints to this effect, pointing out that in the coming election for directors, they should do the same on the English-speaking side. This we declined to do in the present divided situation, since the by-laws expressly stated that any member of the corporation could be nominated and elected to the post. We anticipated that this time we would have to vote by ballot as there would likely be more than one candidate nominated.

As the day drew near, we learned, there was much activity in progress to get out the vote, one side wanting to maintain Minoru in office as a director and the other wanting to replace him. The phone lines were hot. It was quite unseemly to say the least. Many saints were informed that they must show up in order to vote. If Minoru was voted out and replaced by someone who was not absolute for Brother Lee's leadership, that for some saints forebode an extremely unstable situation for the church and the property. If Minoru was elected, that to some saints meant a foothold for Brother Lee and the LSM. We, speaking for Al and me, did not have any taste for the whole affair and were certain that in any case Minoru would be re-elected. If Al and I had wanted to remove Minoru (as some were charging us), since we constituted the majority of directors (two against one), we could, according to the by-laws, call a director's meeting and vote Minoru out of the directorship. But this we would never do.

At the close of the morning meeting on March 5th, the Chinese saints from their meeting on the other side of the building filed in, making a total of close to three hundred in attendance. As the president of the corporation, I was responsible to preside over the meeting. I stood and made a few introductory remarks concerning the nature of the meeting: I explained again that as a corporation we were bound legally to have the meeting and that it was a business meeting governed by by-laws, not a church meeting where anyone was free to speak as he was moved. The meeting was then called to order, the purpose of electing a director stated, and the meeting opened for nominations from the members. I endeavored to direct the meeting very strictly according to parliamentary procedure and the by-laws, to assure order, not give any ground for accusations, and eliminate any kind of maneuvering and disturbing behavior. It went fairly well considering the situation.

After a flurry of nominations, a number of which were declined, two persons remained to be voted upon: Chris Leu, who was not an elder, and Minoru Chen. Cards to serve as ballots were distributed, and four brothers chosen previously by the elders collected them and counted the vote. I myself abstained from voting. Minoru was elected, receiving 195 votes, to Chris Leu's 69. It was as I expected. When the count was announced by Al Knoch, the secretary of the corporation, many saints applauded with clapping of hands for Minoru's election. The meeting was soon adjourned.

I determined after that morning that I would never preside over such a church business meeting again. Such a function is wholly out of character with the church and utterly distasteful to the spirit. I was thoroughly fed up with the whole affair.

It has been said that since I failed through the election to have someone else installed to replace Minoru, for that reason I resigned from the eldership. The Lord knows that this is far from the truth and is the product of someone's overworked imagination.

Destroying Work in San Francisco

Brother Lee then speaks on page 72, *FPR*, about the coming together of John So, John Ingalls, Joseph Fung, and Bill Mallon in Europe and their "decision to carry out a destroying work in San Francisco". Yet, according to the record, it was LSM that did a work of destruction in the lives of these brothers that ultimately set them on a course to address the negative situation in the recovery by meeting and speaking according to their convictions.

The Ground of the Church

On page 73, *FPR*, Brother Lee shares that John Ingalls began to meet in "a divisive meeting in Anaheim apart from the church in Anaheim". However, those who began to meet in this way thought that the church in Anaheim was no longer meeting on a proper ground. John So declared this to be so not long before the separate meeting began. He also published and distributed an article, which stated "the ground of the church on Ball Road is Witness Lee and his work and ministry" and that, therefore, "That is NOT the church in Anaheim!" (p. 73, *FPR*) His declaration and published article led Witness Lee to conclude that John So, along with others, should now be disciplined, "quarantined", from the saints and churches. Nevertheless, John So's word was worthy of careful attention.

Open Opposition to the Lord's Recovery

John Ingalls, Bill Mallon, and John So began to publish a paper, which Brother Lee said in *FPR* was in "open opposition to the Lord's recovery and Brother Lee's ministry" (p. 73, *FPR*). They actually were not opposing the recovery; rather, they were responding to the need in the recovery, as they saw it. Their speaking out was the result of getting nowhere through open and sincere fellowship to bring attention to dire needs and situations.

Speakers of "Perverted Things"

A most severe condemnation of the so-called "rebellious ones" comes from Brother Lee in his closing statements in *FPR*. He said, "Their aim is to work on the existing saints in the local churches", and that "This is a fulfillment of Paul's word in Acts 20:30: '*And from among you yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverted things to draw away the disciples after themselves.*' The perverted ones among the believers in the church are always used by the devil, who hates the church, to draw the sheep away to form another 'flock.'"

This is an unfitting and inaccurate word, to say the very least.

Then Brother Lee shares, "This is a brief history of the recent rebellion in the Lord's recovery during the past few years". He then addresses the way to deal with the "present rebellion": 1) to stand against any kind of division 2) to stand against any wind of teaching and any spreading of spiritual death, 3) to separate ourselves from the contagious ones by quarantining them" (p. 74, *FPR*).

Giving a True Account of Our History

Brother Lee said he presented his book, *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*, for “the preservation of the uninformed ones, for the recovery of the deceived ones, for the establishing of the wavering and bothered ones, and for history” (p. 75, *FPR*)

Is this book of false witnessing able to preserve and establish people? Are uninformed ones able to be properly informed? Are deceived ones able to be recovered and wavering or bothered ones established? The answer is no.

Has a true account of our history been given to the churches? No.

The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion does not give a true account of our history and should be totally disregarded.

The Question of Division

After issuing then several shocking and utterly condemning phrases for his former co-workers, Witness Lee said he looked to the Lord that “we would endeavor to keep the oneness of His Body at any cost” and that “the brothers who caused the present turmoil and those who are involved in such an illogical and unjustifiable action would reconsider this matter before the Lord to answer this question, which is the question of so many saints who are concerned for the oneness of the Body of Christ: ‘Is not what you are engaging in divisive, or already a division?’”

A more fitting question is why didn’t Brother Lee, Benson Phillips, and Ray Graver endeavor to keep the oneness of the Body in the Southeast, in Europe, in Southern California and elsewhere? Shouldn’t the question have been asked of THEM: “Was not what LSM engaged in divisive and did it not issue in division?” And, isn’t it “illogical and unjustifiable” to ignore and cover up the major causes of division stemming from LSM - morally in the office and spiritually in the churches, and then to displace all blame onto others who were stumbled by LSM?

Gene Gruhler Testimony

Gene Gruhler made several mistakes in his testimony in *Fermentation*. His disadvantage in seeing and knowing matters clearly was that he was not in the church in Anaheim; he was far away in Denver, Colorado. He supposed he knew what he was talking about even though he was not standing where John Ingalls, Al Knoch, and Godfred Otuteye were standing, and he wasn’t in their shoes. Therefore, his paradigm was off when he spoke, as were all those outside the locality of Anaheim, including those brothers who are recorded at the end of *FPR* who had sent letters to the Anaheim elders to condemn their handling of the chaotic meetings and situation in Anaheim that they had heard about. The brothers simply didn’t know the situation or what they were talking about. The whole book on *The Fermentation*, in fact, is based on a wrong paradigm and superficial observation, which is why it careens off course early and follows an imaginary track of building a case about a conspiracy.

Sixteen Points “Attack”

Facts are needed. On page 81, *FPR*, Gene referred to “The Standing of the Church in Anaheim” meeting, saying that the sixteen points given by Godfred and John Ingalls “was absolutely an attack on Brother Lee and also an attempt to cut off the church from the Living Stream Ministry.” Gene was mistaken. John Ingalls and others explain in a reasonable way the situation they faced and what their feeling was in presenting the sixteen points fellowship.

Reading Others' Writings

Gene continues by saying something “off the wall” about reading others’ writings. There had been strong words spoken by Brother Lee in elders’ training meetings that “the saints did not need to read others’ writings”, that it was a “waste of our time”, and that we should focus on “the one ministry”. The Anaheim elders (Ingalls, Knoch, Godfred) felt that this was extreme, so they spoke a word in their locality on the matter. Gene Gruhler, however, somehow picked up that they misled the saints, painting “a false picture as if none of us had read anything” other than LSM material. Gene went on to talk about the libraries that some of the brothers had and that he himself had “at least 1500 volumes” in his library. He said, “It is not that we don’t read other books, but that now we know where the gold is.” The Anaheim elders, of course, were not saying that none of them had read others’ writings in the past or that they didn’t have other books in their homes. Their point was on the up-to-date directive in the churches to be restricted to LSM material. They knew where the gold was, but they also felt they needed to be balanced in this matter for their locality.

Gene said of the Anaheim elders, “a false impression was created” by them. There was actually no false impression created by them, but Gene created a strange, false impression of the Anaheim elders (p. 81, *FPR*.)

Godfred Accused by Gene Gruhler

Gene fired shots at several brothers, including Godfred Otuteye, as elders were analyzed and condemned by Gene in a premature way. Things he should have left alone, due to lack of information and proper understanding, he commented on, and judged. He surely didn’t have thorough fellowship with the elders before he spoke. Concerning Godfred, brother Gene said,

Godfred blamed the Living Stream office for its being involved in the young peoples’ work. But the brothers here in Southern California told me that when Godfred came to Anaheim, it was he who said in their coordination meeting that they must check with the manager of the Living Stream office before they make a decision about the junior high and high school conference. If there was any involvement, it was Godfred who instigated it. These and other matters were presented in a very deceptive way in that meeting on August 28th.

What Gene presents is what is deceptive, because he doesn’t give the whole picture. He received a bit of information about Godfred, summed up the matter superficially in his mind, and presented it as condemnation material. He might not have understood how strong the atmosphere of control was in Anaheim with the manager of the Living Stream. Godfred, and others in Southern California were influenced by this control and brought matters to Philip Lee for his approval before proceeding. This was the major problem to be condemned - that *any* of the brothers would submit to Philip Lee in such a way. Godfred had fully repented for his cooperation with the ministry office in this way and then later pointed out the inappropriate involvement of the LSM manager in the young people’s work. The brothers, including Godfred, were indeed at fault for coming under Philip, but the main issue was the control and influence Philip Lee had over elders and co-workers in many spiritual areas, including the young people’s work.

Gene missed this major point that caused serious problems in Anaheim and in the recovery and chose instead to publicly denounce Godfred. Once again, emphasis in *FPR* is not on Philip Lee, who escapes condemnation in the whole book; it is on a supposed “rebellious one”. Gene’s testimony helped build the case against those who had serious and legitimate concerns with the tandem leadership of Philip Lee and his father. John Ingalls describes how things operated in the era of Philip’s reign in Anaheim.

Another matter that concerned us greatly was the growing influence and control of the LSM office, (i. e. Philip Lee) over churches, elders, co-workers, and the full-time training in Taiwan. We had numerous examples of such an intolerable and unscriptural situation. With my own eyes I saw some leading ones reporting to Philip Lee what they were intending to share with a gathering of Orange County young people and ask if he thought that would be all right. I could hardly believe it. Was this the function of a business manager? When I reported this observation to some brothers who had coordinated with Philip Lee and associated with him, they laughed at me and said that that was very common. They were amused by my being startled by this discovery. Godfred even admitted later that he had done the same thing himself: he had suggested that before someone was chosen to lead a young people's conference, it should be checked out with Philip. Godfred fully repented of that. Dan Towle remarked that this was our "life-style". How far off we were!

Gene's Criticism of Sixteen Points Meeting

Gene felt that the brothers' sixteen points fellowship about the standing of the church was improper. Being from Denver, not Anaheim, he did not have a good understanding of the developments in Anaheim that precipitated the decision by the elders to have such fellowship. John Ingalls provides those developments.

As the day drew near for special fellowship with the church as we had announced, Godfred, Al and I came together for prayer and fellowship regarding the content of the coming gathering. We only knew that we needed to clear up some matters and set a direction for the church, and we had been praying individually for guidance concerning the specific points that should be covered. I proposed to the brothers that we briefly expound a number of basic matters according to the Word of God that set forth the proper standing of the church, touching especially the aspects both of truth and practice that related to our current situation. The brothers consented. After some consideration we decided that I would cover eight points concerning the truth and Godfred would cover eight points regarding the practice; in conclusion Al would give a testimony of confirmation.

The brothers felt the need to have special fellowship based upon special conditions that had developed in Anaheim. However, both Gene and Dan Towle thought the brothers committed a sin to declare the standing of the church, and speak to the cloudy situation in Anaheim and to the threat of division that they faced.

Gene felt that the sixteen points fellowship opened the door to everything that followed, which was mainly indignant outpourings about undealt-with sin in the office of Living Stream. John Ingalls explained that it was not that meeting that set off the chaos that followed that evening and in subsequent weeks. Brothers and sisters were already at the point of breaking out any time in any meeting. It had been building up and they came ready that night to speak.

Gene had a problem with the sharing of confidential matters that took place in testimonies after that meeting. Those speaking about confidential matters had a problem understanding why these matters had not been dealt with in the first place. In his writing, John Ingalls shared that he never supported the public condemnation of LSM and Philip Lee, but he makes it clear that a powder keg situation had developed and trying to stop people from speaking in those highly charged meetings would cause a huge explosion. The matters ultimately became public because a man and his sins were not dealt with in the LSM office.

Gene implies that these saints were impatient, but the moral misconduct had been going on for months and was not being dealt with. A serious sexual harassment case like this normally calls for

immediate dismissal, and no one, including Brother Lee denied that the church had such a case on their hands. They both, Gene and Brother Lee, had received similar reports ten years prior, and Philip was retained at that time also, to the frustration of elders, including Gene Gruhler, and many saints in Anaheim.

Gene Condemns Chaotic Meetings

On page 84 and 85, *FPR*, Gene talks about and condemns chaotic meetings that took place in Anaheim, and he condemns the elders too, who he feels were responsible for the lack of control in the meetings. John Ingalls shares,

Eventually the meeting was brought to a close. Never in our history had there been a meeting like that. Although we sympathized with their concerns, we could not agree with their way of handling them. Yet, we allowed it to continue, and when Godfred spoke, he spoke for all of us.

It was over at length, and we felt that we must now shut the door on that kind of behavior and not have it repeated again. The meeting was surely worthy of blame, but let those who shake their finger and raise their voice and write letters in reproof equally blame those responsible for the problems which were the root cause of such a meeting. If there was no ground for it, no problems of such enormous magnitude, these saints who loved the Lord's recovery and gave themselves for it, and some of whom were naturally meek and mild, would never have erupted in that way.

To our great dismay we learned later that some saints who had recorded the October 9th meeting had sent out copies of the tapes to the elders of the churches in this country. We had no idea that they intended to do this or were carrying it out, and when we heard we strongly disapproved of their action. Just recently we found that the one responsible for this distribution was someone in another place, another church, altogether apart from the saints in Anaheim. But he had used the P.O. Box of someone in Anaheim who was not meeting with us for a return address.

We then began to receive numerous letters from elders all over the country addressed to the elders in Anaheim, castigating us for allowing such a meeting to take place. Many of them sent a copy of their letter to Brother Lee. But I wonder what they would have done had they been in our shoes and passed through what we had passed through. It is easy to criticize from a distance (I think that many who wrote were glad to be at a distance from the church in Anaheim), but when you are in the middle of the problem and have to deal with it, it is another story.

Al Knoch About Bringing Brother Lee Down

On page 87, *FPR*, Gene refers to Al Knoch's statement that "they will not be satisfied until they bring Witness Lee down." When Gene asked what he meant by that, Al said, "They want Brother Lee to repent for everything." Gene then says in *FPR*, "Of course it wasn't defined what 'everything' was. This shows the real target of all the attacks was Brother Lee."

If campaigns for Brother Lee caused him to be overly exalted, and if the promotions for him and his ministry were over-emphasized, and if Brother Lee's sinful son remained in the office to continue his tandem reign with his father and carry on divisive and devastating work in his name, then in these senses the brothers felt Brother Lee needed to be brought down, and repent "for everything" and the damage that had been caused. Gene Gruhler misrepresented Al Knoch in not explaining or caring for the senses in which the brothers felt Brother Lee needed to be "brought down". Of

course, Al could have told him what “everything” was if Gene indeed was willing to listen or if Al was willing to tell him at the time.

Resigning of Anaheim Elders

There were many who felt that John, Al, and Godfred were forced out of the eldership in Anaheim. Gene says, however, they actually lost their eldership “by their actions” that nobody “forced them out”. Right. Technically, nobody forced them out. But they felt they had no real choice but to resign and were, in effect, forced out. John Ingalls shares about an activist group within the church in Anaheim, who were in “fellowship” with Brother Lee, and effectively undermined the eldership in their quest to line up the church in Anaheim with a universal leader.

On Monday evening, January 9th, 1989 we met then with the brothers who had signed the letter to us. On February 7th, about one month later we met with them again. During those times the brothers grilled us and accused us in a manner that was quite out-of-character for them. This led us to suspect that they were receiving direction from behind the scenes. (We received a definite report through one of them to another brother that they had met with Brother Lee and talked with him about the Anaheim elders.) The atmosphere in these meetings was tense and oppressive. We felt that it was altogether not profitable for anyone or for the whole situation to meet in such a way. The chief spokesman for the brothers said to my face bluntly, emphatically, and with great finality, "We will *not* follow your direction!" Minoru Chen, one of the other elders in Anaheim, strongly confirmed and supported them. The meetings succeeded only in letting us know how they felt about some things, matters which we held an altogether different view and told them so.

These brothers, with two or three exceptions, had been with us for many years and knew us well, as we did them. Most all of them were exceedingly quiet and retiring brothers, but they represented a number of saints who desired to receive Brother Lee’s ministry and leadership and were not happy with the way we were taking, although we endeavored to practice generality toward all saints regardless of their preference. They obviously did not agree with that or appreciate that. It was abundantly clear that, at least to them, our eldership was in name only. It was a grievous situation and one that could not continue much longer.

LSM Finance Fellowship Skipped Philip’s Salary Information

Gene begins a lengthy explanation on page 94 of *FPR* concerning rumors related to the Living Stream corporation and its finances, but he never comes to the point of answering the question in the minds of saints about Philip Lee’s income. Gene discusses what a non-profit 501 © (3) corporation can and cannot do with funds and he describes how a major public accounting firm took over the accounting and bookkeeping of Living Stream in 1979. Still he never touches the accusations of Philip Lee receiving money for himself that was intended for other purposes. A pamphlet that was being circulated reported that he boasted of owning a \$10,000 watch. This suggests that he might have received an income that was far above average for his position. This man was a shady character and people wanted to have a transparent look at the use of monies collected by LSM from donations for trainings and for book sales and see how much went into the pocket of Philip Lee. As much time as Gene and Dan Towle took in *Fermentation* on explaining LSM finances, they did not answer this question. Philip Lee was an employee. How much did he make? Most would offer that since the information about Philip wasn’t given by either brother, they must have thought it would not work well to give the actual salary figure. That figure could have been \$100,000 a year or more. We don’t

know. But it is likely that it was much more than the average salary in Southern California for a manager of a printing and distribution business. Was Philip Lee a man who not only brought corruption and division into the recovery, but also a man who got inordinate amounts of money out of the saints' pockets and into his? Was his idea of employing the standing order for books in every locality a spiritual step born of the Lord or was it a keen strategy for a businessman to boost his profits significantly around the world? It was not a spiritual step of the Lord but a practical step of a businessman, or men, as books piled up in closets, garages, and other places never to have a page turned in most of them. It was impracticable for most of the saints to buy so many books, when the current encouraged reading of the Bible and ministry material was plenty, reasonable, and do-able. To buy a book according to one's choice and chosen time for buying is also reasonable.

To implement the standing order for books meant to increase book sales dramatically around the world in the recovery. What was the motive for this? How much money was Philip Lee awarded as a result of his forceful and successful efforts to spread LSM stations and influence around the world? What is the figure? This man was certainly not motivated by the Lord in anything he did, from what is gathered by those who were close to him. Even his father admitted that Philip was not a spiritual person, while many others questioned whether he had even been regenerated. Philip Lee was not associated with the recovery for the Lord's interests; he was involved for his own benefit, the Lee name, and, perhaps, prosperity. How much money was awarded him? How much does he make today from the saints, if anything? What percentage of the high cost for training "donations" went to him or to his family today? We don't know. The brothers will not make the matter clear before the saints concerning Philip Lee and his monetary procurements and awards from LSM, which bespeaks the likelihood that they are hiding information from the saints about Philip for good reason. This is conjecture, risky as that is. But if the character of our leadership had been transparent and honest over the years, the matter would be known, and saints would not need to wonder or to guess about the matter. Where the saints' monies go is important. Where is the record, brothers, of Philip Lee's income? How much did Witness Lee and his family receive?

Dan Towle Testimony

No Conspiracy

Dan Towle shares, "in the fall of 1987, John Ingalls and I were talking about some mutual concerns we had for what we perceived as problems in the recovery. Based upon this conversation, I agreed to come to his house to talk about these concerns. In my heart, I didn't consider what we talked about as a conspiracy." (p. 99, *FPR*)

Dan didn't consider what they talked about as a conspiracy. John never did consider what he talked about with anyone as a conspiracy. This is because there were just brothers addressing their mutual concerns in a time of upheaval. Dan Towle thought John's concerns were going further than necessary. John Ingalls did not feel that way, but began to meet with others in the same way he met with Dan, to discuss genuine concerns that were on a broader scale than Dan's.

Brother Lee's Age A Factor

Dan mentioned that John Ingalls told Francis Ball that Brother Lee was “like many spiritual leaders who start to make mistakes and have problems when they are old.” (*FPR*, p. 99)

It seems that other spiritual leaders can have problems when they are old but not Brother Lee, in the minds of ones like brother Dan. Nevertheless, Witness Lee did as Moses did in making angry references to the people of God as rebels in his later years. Related to Moses' sin, Watchman Nee said, “*We must fear and tremble when we are managing the affairs of God. Let us beware lest we grow careless and reckless as we become older*”. (See p. 25, *Moses' Wrong Spirit*) Did Witness Lee become careless and reckless when he was older? The record in this book shows that he did in his speaking, his actions, and in his representation of others. John Ingalls' word should be respected.

Ken Unger and Dan Towle

Dan Towle said on page 100, *FPR*, “In the second meeting at John Ingalls' house, Ken Unger and I arrived at the same time in separate cars. As Ken and I got out of our cars and were walking up to the house, I noticed that Ken was visibly shaken. I then asked Ken if he was all right. He was shaking his head and seemed to be dazed. He said that he had just spent a long time on the phone with John So and that I could not believe the things John So was saying. At that time I realized that something very serious was taking place.” Dan later described Ken as a basket case due to his contact with John So. (See page 134)

Ken and his wife, by their deep involvement with LSM, were to hear reports from various sources in the late eighties turmoil, not only from John So. Shouldn't Dan Towle have been more interested in the divisive work of LSM in Europe that affected John So, than in condemning him for speaking to brother Ken about the serious matters affecting Europe?

John So and Dan Towle

On page 100 of *FPR*, Dan Towle shares about his conversation with John So in the summer of 1988 when they went out to lunch together. John confirmed to Dan a report in which John So said that Philip Lee was only “a fly to him and was not the issue”, that “the real issue was the philosophy of a king”, which “indicated that the real problem in the recovery was the exalting of the ministry of Brother Lee”. This had been John So's deduction from his experience and observation.

Dan, then, goes on to misrepresent John So, saying that he didn't think John brought up his concerns with Brother Lee when he had the opportunity on that same day of their talk, saying rather that John told Brother Lee that he had no “basic problem”. John shares,

This is not correct. I had actually written to him about all the basic issues. Brother Lee kept on saying that I said in his home, “there is no basic problem. We don't have any basic problem.” In this letter that I wrote to him -- I even wrote to him, it's written down, and it was sent to him -- I dealt with all the basic problems in that letter. I poured out everything that is on my heart, whether he wants to hear it or not, whether I offend him or not. I'm sorry. I had no intention to offend, but if I was wrong, then I was wrong. I began the letter by telling him about the saints in England when they came back from Irving. I also brought up Bill Kirkham's letter and Brother Lee's reply to the letter that “it is wise and profitable not to make any issue”. I told him there in his home, “Bill Kirkham wrote you that letter. It was like somebody's house is on fire and called the fire department,

and the chief of the fire department says, oh, don't make an issue, and then he hangs up. And not only did you not help the situation in England, you put gasoline into it to widen the fire in England. Then you told others regarding Bill Kirkham's letter that the one who wrote this letter wants something for himself."

After writing this to our dear brother, do you think I would say to him there is no problem, that I have no problem, that everything is all right? At his home, Brother Lee said to me let's draw a line and forget about the past. It's all over. I said, how can it all be over? What have you done? I said to him Brother Lee I have nothing to tell you because what I want to tell you is already in the letter. He said, "Oh, I didn't have time to read the letter". I said that's fine. At that time we were still friendly.

John So Learns of Philip Lee's Immoral Behavior

One statement Dan Towle made was that "John So also claimed that there were problems related to the activity of certain staff members at the Living Stream Ministry office, but to my understanding he never brought this matter up when Brother Lee asked him if there were any basic problems."

Dan was wrong, as was discussed earlier. John So did bring up the matter with Brother Lee.

I went to meet with Brother Lee at 10:15 in the morning. After talking to Witness Lee that evening, I was invited by a family for dinner and another couple was also invited. The sister of the couple was one of the most trusted employees at the LSM office and told me about the moral misconduct of Philip Lee at the office. And after that night of fellowship I couldn't sleep.

The next day, I talked to Brother Lee by phone. My heart was quite heavy and very upset. He said, "I heard from my son-in-law that you want to talk to me, that you have some questions to ask me." I said, "no, it must be a misunderstanding. But I will tell you anyway what happened last night", and I told him about the conversation I had with the LSM sister. I then said to him, "Brother Lee, I realize now why the churches don't have blessings in all these years" (Appendix 2).

"Oh, there are lots of blessings."

I said, "Where?"

"Taipei".

I said, "I'm not very sure. I'll see it for myself."

"You should come, come, come right now. Let's have a talk."

I said, "Brother Lee, I don't have the heart and I'm not in a condition to talk to anyone right now. Just wait till my heart cools down. Wait till I can calm down." I never told our brother that there is "no basic problem", that everything is all right. I don't remember that I would have said that. This book [*FPR*] said he asked me many times if there was any problem, and that I said no, there was none. This isn't correct. Actually, I told him exactly what I heard and what I knew. I was quite disgusted!

On page 101 of *FPR*, Dan Towle erringly asserts, "because John did not speak with Brother Lee in a forthright way concerning the problems he may have had, there was really no way to deal with them" and that "it was clear that John's goal was not to take care of real problems."

Actually, John So did speak to Brother Lee in a forthright way by letter and in phone conversations and it surely was “his goal to take care of real problems”. *Taking care of those problems, however, was not Brother Lee’s goal or concern.* John So shares,

So when we went back to Germany still nothing happened. We never heard from Brother Lee and our concerns were never addressed. Finally, the churches, the brothers in Manchester, the church in Blackpool, and the church also in Stuttgart wrote a letter to Witness Lee to disassociate with some of the things that have been occurring in the LSM, which we feel for the testimony’s sake before the Lord, we just had to do. Right or wrong, we’ll let the Lord judge.

The “Rebellious Ones” Concerns

On page 101, *FPR*, Dan Towle says, “a number of brothers today are taking the lead to form divisions and oppose the ministry.”

The brothers that Dan refers to were not taking the lead to form divisions. Instead, they were *reacting* to the divisive elements already in place and operating in the recovery. They were not opposing the ministry either, but realized, rather, that the ministry was being overly exalted and emphasized in the church, and causing division in the churches.

Then Dan talks about the brothers’ concerns as if they were not genuine concerns, saying, “their word ‘concerns’ was a sleight”, that “actually, there was something behind their so-called concerns”. They had a “goal” they were going toward, to “bring down Brother Lee”.

What did the brothers mean about bringing Brother Lee down? They meant that whatever Brother Lee was doing or that others were doing in his name that was not of the Lord should be brought down. The brothers were not conspiring to take over the recovery, which is what Dan Towle implied here.

Brother Lee Likened to Balaam

Brother Dan Towle continued his assault on the persons and characters of former leaders. On page 106, *FPR*, he referred to one of John So’s severe words about Witness Lee, that he was like Balaam, profiting from the saints.

This subject is so serious it needs a book of its own to address it, replete with personal testimonies. Such a book might be in the offing to help explain the duplicitous nature and history of Witness Lee and his money-making misadventures with the saints. Such a history dates back to Taipei that left many people disillusioned and disappointed with him.

Around 1959 Mr. Lee had some investment failures and he lost a great deal of money. This brought the first financial crisis to the church. All the donations and contributions from the church members were used, and still the church owed people a large amount of money. Because of this situation, Brother Lee forced the elders to sell a piece of land belonging to the church in order to pay the debt. That piece of land was located on 19 East Road, section 4, and had been bought by the church to build a training center and a new assembly building. Because of that, many coworkers and church members were especially unhappy about this fiasco. Mr. Lee knew this was something that he did wrong and because of that he went to the United States and stayed on the West Coast. (Larry Chi)

James Barber's son, Brent: The late James Barber was one of the most prominent elders in the Lord's recovery, and was originally one of the elders in Los Angeles with John Ingalls, Bill Mallon, Samuel Chang, Francis Ball, and Don Hardy. His son, Brent Barber, gives more insight into the problem of Witness Lee, his money-making schemes, and his duplicity that caused great suffering to churches and saints.

Brent Barber: "Lee was guilty of many botched financial schemes that went sour. They were promoted in meetings. The "church" always strongly suggested that no one should seek any reimbursement. Some were incensed enough to get receipts. Most were intimidated into taking a big bath. There were several who lost everything in these deals that were sold in the meetings. Anyone remember the tennis racket factory? That one is hilarious. I think it was called "Delta." Get this. A hurricane destroyed the factory after Lee had gotten everyone to shell out hundreds of thousands of dollars. I remember this one well because we had to cart around dozens of boxes of unsellable tennis rackets every time we moved...

On a strictly business level, they were simply bad investments. You play, you pay. But there was a whole different dimension to these investments in that they were being personally pitched by Lee and there was a suggestion this was for the Lord's way. One "elder" in OKC was still paying for his investment in Daystar in the late 80's, about 15 years after it quickly went belly up. He took out a big loan and was in hock ever since. Despite being an "elder," whenever he talked about that episode, he got red under the collar. A lot of people got burned.

My mom has told me about suits, jewelry, tons of import stuff. One time when she was washing the cup for the Lord's Table she happened to walk into the kitchen where Lee was all wound up in a sales pitch to someone. She was shocked because he was a totally different person. According to her, he was unrecognizable and had a different personality when he was discussing money. When Lee saw her, he jumped a foot into the air and shut up."

Dan Towle's criticism of the comparison of Witness Lee to Balaam would not survive the heavy documentation supporting such a comparison. Read *People Change* for further detail.

System of Error

On page 106, *FPR*, Dan Towle levels a very heavy accusation: "There is a system of error with these ones, and their goal is to tear down the building up of the Body of Christ." Dan Towle's speaking was in the same dark cloud of other false witnesses found in *The Fermentation of the Present Rebellion*, a book that has been "tearing down the building up work in the Body of Christ" for many years.

John Little Testimony

John Little knew of Bill Mallon's struggles with LSM in the Southeast and had serious trouble with LSM as well. Yet, he kept these matters hidden at the quarantine conference and lined up with the persecutors of Bill Mallon. In a meeting charged with building on the conspiracy theory and piling on the alleged conspirators, John Little spoke his words of condemnation concerning Bill Mallon.

John says on page 126 of *FPR* that in October 1987 Bill Mallon came to visit him: “There were charges of control by the Living Stream Ministry office, charges of immorality, charges about the Taipei training, charges about the usurping of the human will, and all kinds of charges.”

These were actually serious issues that required addressing, and John knew this, yet kept the matters hidden at the quarantine conference, covering Noah, and demonstrated his “oneness” with him by taking his turn in line to speak against Bill. In his conscience, though, John should have known better.

Here is one of many examples of experiences John Little was well aware of concerning the controlling tactics of LSM in the Southeast that Bill Mallon related in a letter to Brother Lee:

In the Spring of 1986, the office purchased a house near Davison campus, just north of Charlotte. Their fellowship with the brothers was not only withheld, but the brothers were also censured as being unfit for coordination and too slow for cooperation. Roger Fiero was selected by the office to take charge as a full-time worker, a brother of whom everyone in the South was extremely reluctant. I suggested that we should go slow with this brother, but upon hearing this, the office deliberately and hastily purchased the house and installed this brother into position, flagrantly declaring that when the Lord moves, He moves quickly, that time is important and the door is now open to North Carolina, and that we have only a little time to be faithful. They utilized this brother and went on a promotional campaign to push this project by means of video tape.

Later, at an Irving training, the office called on the carpet brothers who represented the churches in the South. With video cameras trained on them, the office reprimanded them for not financially supporting Roger, berated them for not being one with the ministry, and pressured them for monthly pledges under a cloud of intimidation. In fact, the brothers were asked to write out checks totaling \$6,000 right on the spot for his personal debts, and then to pay monthly amounts for his pledged support. But before this time, not once was the opportunity for fellowship given to the brothers, for they were not aware of this matter. Afterwards, when Tom Cesar asked Ray Graver for an explanation for the seriousness of the meeting, Ray sharply answered, "we do what we are told!" This incident is contrary to your fellowship with the churches in that the full-timers should be approved by the churches. (Recently, it was discovered that Roger had received double, overlapping support for a few months after this training from both the office and the churches--what a bungled mess!)

Several months later, Roger Fiero was manifested to be the wrong brother, because of such weaknesses as fabricating stories and practicing opportunism. Once Tom Cesar and John Little called the office about problems he was causing; they were accused of an impure heart, being not supportive of the work on Davison campus. Later, Tom was told that the ministry never makes a mistake!

Although the brothers in the South are not perfect, having many weaknesses, they nevertheless attempt to run backwards in order to be in one accord, but the office fails to give them the opportunity of fellowship to demonstrate their oneness. The principals from the office who are involved in these affairs are Philip, Benson, and Ray (I hesitate to mention these dear ones by name, but please allow me this liberty for the sake of honesty). Much embarrassment, confusion, harassment, and demoralization resulted from their attitude and behavior. On June 11, 1986, during the time in your home when you fellowshiped with me, you identified the problem in every region as having the deficiency of the intrinsic fellowship of the one accord, but in this case, it is not the region, but the office who violates this principle and practice.

It takes both the giving and receiving sides to release the intrinsic flow of mutual fellowship.

Maybe John Little was just better than Bill at “not making an issue of anything” concerning the divisive activities of LSM in their region.

Bill’s Criticisms

John Little spoke of Bill’s “self-interest” and “problem with offenses” that according to John’s estimation was a stumbling to Bill. He did not mention the sore trials that the Southeast suffered at the hands of LSM, which were indeed factors of stumbling to Bill that evoked criticisms from him, “charges of control by the Living Stream Ministry office, charges of immorality, charges about the Taipei training, charges about the usurping of the human will, and all kinds of charges” (p. 126, 127 *FPR*). Was John Little concerned about the legitimacy of these charges? Or was his concern for “the covering of Noah?”

The Charge of Not Covering Noah

On page 129 of *FPR* John Little says,

Concerning the accusations that were made, I told [John Ingalls and Bill Mallon] that I didn’t know whether or not they were true, but that the Lord had reminded me of the case with Noah and his sons and the case of Moses and the criticism of Miriam and Aaron. I shared with the brothers what had impressed me with these two instances. Finally, Brother John Ingalls spoke up and told me that he did not believe that the case concerning Noah applied. I responded that surely Ham sinned but why was he cursed for generations? It was because he touched God’s government. There is the side of personal sin and the side of God’s government. Nothing was said in response to this. I told them that the issue and result would be division. They had nothing to say.

What could they say to John Little’s speaking in this way after what they had shared with him and what John Little himself had experienced? If John Little felt that Brother Lee should get a pass for hiring a sinful son, and letting the son run rampant in the recovery, acting out of his flesh in lusts and temper, while making divisions and stumbling elders and co-workers, then what else could be said to him? The result was already division, so why does John say, “the result will be division”. John doesn’t lay any charge to “Noah”, but covers him, and the division.

The convenient application of the Noah example in the Bible seems to soothe one’s conscience on covering matters related to Brother Lee, but it is a faulty example. Noah was not leading God’s people and reprimanding them as rebels. Moses did that. Why not apply this biblical example? Moses’ problem with God dealt directly with how he treated God’s people and whether or not he was actually representing God in his doing. Getting angry with the people and calling them rebels was not what God was doing; it was what Moses was doing. Therefore, God dealt with him. Watchman Nee shares at the end of his fellowship on the subject,

We are too prone to err... We must fear and tremble when we are managing the affairs of God. Let us beware lest we grow careless and reckless as we become older (See p. 29-30 Moses’ Wrong Spirit).

If we are genuine people of God, and unbiased in reporting, we have to also embrace the example of Eli and his two sons, because the parallels are there concerning Witness Lee and his two sons. (See appendix 2)

John Little and other brothers have taken the easy way, not the righteous way, to deal with the man of God they revere. To speak of the case of covering Noah and the case of Miriam and Aaron and neglect the cases of the judgment of God against Moses, Eli, and David with Bathsheba is not forthright, or fitting.

John Little finished his speaking in *FPR*, with more spiritual talk and analysis, accusing Bill severely and personally, saying, he “sought sympathy” and therefore had personal interest in “pouring out his concerns”, which were “not genuine”, they were “just a smokescreen”. John finished taking his turn in line and took his seat.

Gene Gruhler and Dan Towle Offer Final Words

The long line of speakers in *FPR* finished with Gene Gruhler and Dan Towle, the two who began the procession of “witnesses” to the stand. They spoke very strongly against their former fellow co-workers as top spokesmen of the virtual tribunal.

Strangely, they both spoke of learning from history, albeit, the one-sided version they helped invent and that would soon be in print for the saints “to learn”. Gene’s word on page 143 in *FPR* says, “The Lord’s recovery has passed through some things, and the things we have been fellowshipping are not with the purpose of exposing anyone in a personal way. But those who don’t learn from history are doomed to repeat history. We want to learn.” Gene declares to all the leading ones that we want “to learn”.

Dan Towle said on page 148 of *FPR*, “*We all have a lot we can learn. I think we have to take Brother Lee’s fellowship concerning the present rebellion in a learning spirit. We should receive this fellowship not to criticize people or hold them up to ridicule, but in an atmosphere of analysis of how we can learn and profit, so that somehow the Lord could have mercy on us, and we can avoid repeating history.*” Dan wants to avoid repeating history.

Dan says on page 149 of *FPR*, “Some may wonder why we need to come together to hear all the events of the present rebellion. We have to hear them until we are really clear. Brother Lee said that even we brothers who have been studying this present rebellion were not really clear in the way that he was clear concerning what has happened in the last number of years. This presents an inherent danger. At some point we may forget history and forget what really happened. Then we will repeat it.”

What really happened? The leadership in the recovery has never informed the churches!

Credo Followed

They have merely followed the credo: “Make the history and then write it yourself before anyone else can....”

As the quote at the beginning of this document said about presidents and the recording of their history, “families and former aides will try to protect presidents and their reputations. They will try to create and write their own history and block outsiders from challenging the official version.”

The “aides” did their “job” to protect. But they still haven’t told us our history. The factual history that has relevance for our learning - and not repeating - has been blocked. The fairy tale version of our history is what has been told and has survived to this day as the “official version”. It will be hard then to take Dan’s warning that “at some point we may forget history and what really happened”.

Plymouth Brethren and the Local Churches

We have the record of the Plymouth Brethren and saw how division came in through the system of Darbyism, as people were excluded for not holding the right concepts. They didn't fit in with the assemblies that were united in a special unity around the world through Darby's teachings. John Darby, accordingly, received the blame for this cutting off of fellow members from the fellowship of the Body.

It is evident that the Brethren lacked love for maintaining their "brilliant unity" and in accommodating others for the building up of the Body of Christ. Their "Golden Age" was over in twenty years. Unity, their top-most objective was broken, as one of the Brethren leaders, lamented.

Our shame is public. It requires no spirituality to see that exactly that which we have professedly sought, we have failed most signally. "The unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" is most surely what we have not kept. - *FW Grant*

Another brother observed,

The Brethren are remarkable people for rightly dividing the Word of Truth and wrongly dividing themselves! - *Griffith Thomas*

At the end of his sharing in *FPR*, Witness Lee exhorted the leading ones, who had just spent two days castigating their former fellow co-workers, to "endeavor to keep the oneness of His Body at any cost". I have to say, it is not clear to me what Brother Lee meant by this word. He did the opposite of this exhortation in order to carry out the "big plans" that LSM had to move into localities around the globe. He didn't keep the "oneness of the Body" at any cost then, or else he would have responded in a proper spirit and attitude to reports in the Southeast of violations of the oneness of the Body and of the oneness in the work between elders and workers. He would have done the same in England, Germany, and Rosemead when he heard of LSM usurpations, interferences, and control. His silence and lack of response was taken as the voice of complicity to the divisive work of Living Stream.

He let the violations of the oneness of the Body occur, and he did so "at any cost", losing co-workers, churches, and saints. He was after a new way, new elders, and a new mentality in the "churches", while he labeled those who raised challenging questions as slanderers, perverted ones, rebellious ones, and so forth. He showed little regard for keeping the oneness of the Body. He was "cleaning house" and starting something new.

Witness Lee set a system in place that others are maintaining well in the churches thus far, nearly ten years after his passing (1997). But the sectarian mindset that is unavoidable in such a system is here. The churches of the Lord's recovery have experienced much organization over the last twenty years by its leadership. In 2005, a proclamation concerning having only one publication in the recovery went out to the churches that will further organize the recovery under the domination of LSM. A type of control mechanism is being instituted by that "little office" of "limited function" to further systematize the already heavily systematized recovery. The divisive elements long embodied in the narrow heart of LSM representatives are surely being manifest today in the One Publication Proclamation.

Division is resulting from the push and the emphasis, in the same way that division resulted from the strong push and emphasis in the LSM drive that began in the early eighties and plowed through the late eighties, creating havoc, and into the nineties with great momentum, until arriving at today with Proclamation in hand and a line drawn.

We need to return to the ground of oneness with no over-emphasis on a person, a ministry, or a way in order to afford the Lord an *inclusive* way to move in His Body in local churches, rather than to confine Him to the *exclusive* way of a movement within a system.

There is no more clear indication of the sectarian mindset found in the local churches than to have direct encounters with its leaders. One said in a letter to me: *“It’s your concepts we can’t handle, they have to go, and, if you want to go with them, that’s up to you. The Body will reject what you’re thinking between your ears...all who make it in the Lord’s recovery do so because they agree in their thought and concept with what the Lord’s recovery stands for...Without light, you will never be able to come back to the recovery.”*

These remarks were spoken in reference to my concepts that are simply derived from the truth of our history. This elder then prescribes steps for a person who commits sins, which he and his LSM-minded counterparts would do well to take heed. He states,

In Brother Lee's book "the Experience of Life" he talks about being right with God and with the body. The main factor is the matter of the proper dealing. THE SCOPE OF THE OFFENCE DETERMINES THE SCOPE OF THE DEALING. If one commits a sin only in the mind, it can be cleared up very easily. All the person has to do is confess to the Lord and claim the Lord's blood and he is forgiven. If one sins in speaking a word that he shouldn't have to a member of the body, then he has to not only confess to the Lord but also ask forgiveness from the person he spoke the word to. If one sins against the church, then he has to confess to the Lord and ask forgiveness publicly from the church. If one sins against the recovery, he has to confess to the Lord and also ask forgiveness from the entire recovery. You have most certainly sinned against the entire recovery. The website of your "book" and also the website of your "fellowship" with those such as Don Hardy and others is now a VERY BIG PROBLEM FOR YOU. Your thought about the recovery being wrong is your major problem. Brother Lee was never wrong about anything that happened regarding the rebellion with John Ingalls in the late 1980's. Brother Lee is a different person than Philip Lee. Brother Lee would never do things that others would do. As long as you think that you are right about what you did but that the problem is that the brothers from the local churches are not open, this is a proof that you have no light on this matter. And until you get light, you have no way with the Lord. Without light, you will never be able to come back to the Lord's recovery. Because you just don't know how to handle this situation. You are completely in the dark. Repentance is a mercy that is granted to us only by the Lord. But repentance only comes when one realizes that he is altogether WRONG. - May 4, 2004

May this dear brother realize that there are many who are “altogether WRONG”, including himself, and that confessions need to be made by many – to the church, to individuals, and some need to confess their sins to the whole recovery. The mentality exhibited in his writing is a widespread problem among local church leaders that has caused untold damage to the saints and division in the churches. It is not the mind of Christ. This is my “thought and concept”. Repentance is needed among such leaders. THEY HAVE A HISTORY.

And, we all need to repent for our sins of bearing false witness concerning the former leading ones and come back to the proper ground for meeting, with Christ preeminent on that ground as the way to accommodate all the saints in an atmosphere of love for the building up of the Body of Christ.

The ministry should have its place; it is for the church. And, the church is for Christ as our major factor of genuine oneness, which includes oneness with those whose *concepts* He can receive and whose souls He loves. This is to “receive people according to the Son of God, the path from which we should not deviate”.